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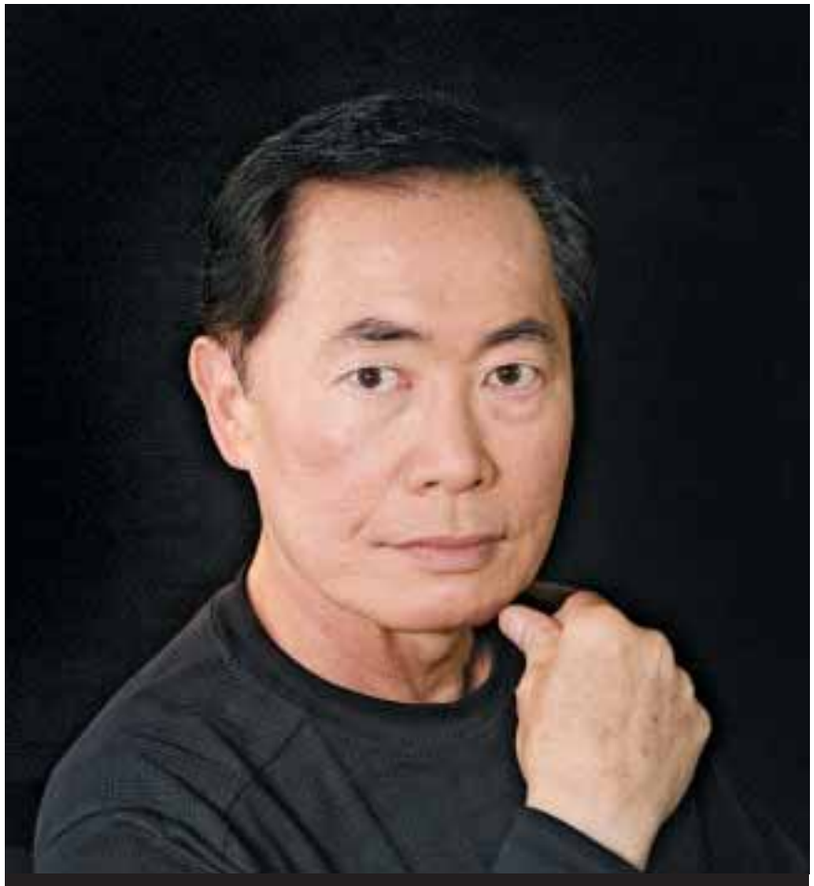
Wait, they stole what?

Police aren't connecting a bizarre string of thefts, but say the whole charade is taxing their resources PAGE 2

No Metro on Monday

Look for us again Tuesday. Meanwhile, enjoy the long weekend and don't work too hard on Labour Day!



Actor and activist George Takei will take Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra audiences through the great orchestral works of sci-fi from Sept. 27 to 29. It will be his first time in Winnipeg. COURTESY WSO

Get ready for a Takei old time at the orchestra

Ohhhhhh myyyyyyyy. Actor and activist to take on the Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra

ELISHA DACEY
elisha.dacey@metronews.ca

For those more familiar with his role as Hikaru Sulu on Star Trek, finding out George Takei is performing with the Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra might perk up one's Vulcan ears.

But the 76-year-old actor, who has Canadian cousins in Ontario and B.C., has actually narrated symphony concerts for the past 15 years.

"I talk. I don't sing, I don't play an instrument," laughed Takei. "I do sing … but I am not a symphonic singer."

Takei's musicianship extends much further. Last year, the actor performed in Allegiance, a dramatic musical about the internment of Japanese-Americans after the bombing of Pearl Harbor.

It opened to rave reviews and had to extend its run in San Diego. It opens on Broadway next year, and Takei said they hope to put together a tour, including shows in Canada.

Takei, who was held in a camp for three years when he was a child, said getting people to learn about the internment is the reason he took up social media. Thanks to his wry humour, penchant for puns and occasionally scorching social-justice commentary, his popularity has exploded online.

"I discovered there's a great overlap between the LGBT community and the sci-fi geeks and nerds community," said Takei.

And if you still can't get enough Takei, he's in the midst of writing his second autobiography.

"The first book was called To The Stars, and that came out in 1994.... I've lived a lot of material," said Takei, who has since acknowledged he was gay and got married to his husband, Brad. "The next book is called Down To Earth."

Get your fix

Tickets for the WSO's Sci-Fi Spectacular go on sale Tuesday at Ticketmaster.

- **Also watch Takei in November in the animated movie Free Birds, in which he plays the voice of a time machine.**

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NEWS 1

West End wall gets a splash of colour, history

University of Manitoba fine arts student Bryn Vargas stands in front of this year's West End BIZ Mural Mentorship mural, unveiled Wednesday on the east wall of Gohe Ethiopian restaurant at 533 Sargent Ave. Vargas and a team of 165 young people spent the summer creating the mural, called "Memories of Sargent Avenue". SHANE GIBSON/METRO

String of bizarre thefts continue

Scratching their heads. Police spokesperson says the strange burglaries are taxing investigators

The Winnipeg Police Service might want to consider starting a new division devoted to investigating oddball thievery.

Within the last two weeks officers have been called to the scene of a paddlewheel boat that had its steering wheel lifted, the theft of more than 320 19-foot logs cut and ready to be added to the walls of Fort Gibraltar, and a break-in at Lovey's BBQ & Smokehouse that saw nothing but a statue of a pig signed by Dan Aykroyd nicked.

This plaque was stolen. HANDOUT

And the weirdness continued Thursday as police released pictures of two bronze plaques that had adorned the historic Donald H. Bain Building at 115 Bannatyne Ave. up until sometime before Aug. 23, when they disappeared.

Police spokesperson Const. Jason Michalyshen said investigators aren't linking the thefts, but did acknowledge the string of bizarre burglaries are taxing investigators.

"What this quite simply states is that anything of value, nailed down or not, at times is still up for grabs," he said, telling reporters police are still investigating the other three thefts as well. "A lot of resources and a lot of time now has to be spent to investigate these very unfortunate circumstances."

The two plaques read "The Brokerage Bannatyne East" and "Historic Winnipeg", and are valued between $1,200 and $1,500 for the pair.

SHANE GIBSON/METRO

Illegal. Pet alligator found in Winnipeg home

An American Alligator was found and removed from a house in St. Vital Wednesday.

Police and Animal Services Officers responded to the home after receiving a tip the two-foot long animal was being housed in a Winnipeg home.

Not surprisingly, keeping alligators as pets is illegal in Winnipeg under the Responsible Pet Ownership By-Law.

American Alligators, which are normally found in areas of the southern United States, can grow to be 15-feet long and weigh up 1,000 pounds in adulthood, according to the city.

Animal Services says a two-foot alligator was found in a St. Vital Home on Wednesday. HANDOUT

Animal Services is working to find a home for the alligator at an accredited zoo.

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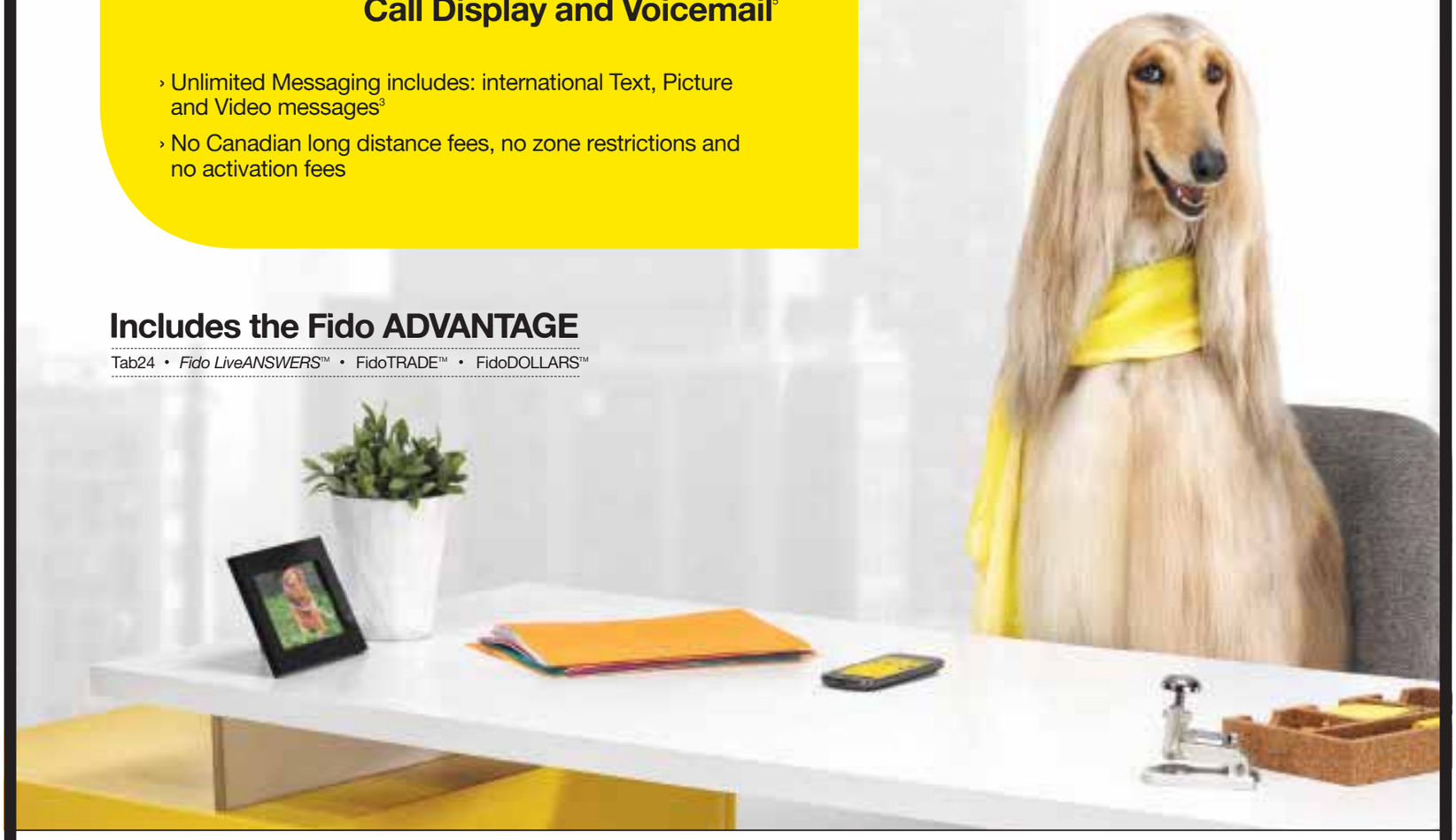

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Operational review. Winnipeg police brass did not leak draft: Chief

Thursday's leak of a preliminary draft of the operational review of the Winnipeg Police Service currently under way by Matrix Consulting Groups Ltd. did not come from senior police executives, according to the force's top cop.

"I can say that that information did not come from any member of our executive," said WPS Chief Devon Clunis at a hastily-called press conference late Thursday afternoon.

The chief's comments came after a story in Thursday's Winnipeg Free Press revealed the cuts recommended in the leaked review include disbanding the forces vice squad and cold-case units, and quoted Winnipeg Police Board chair, Coun. Ross Wyatt, as blaming the leak on police brass.

In the story Wyatt was also quoted as saying parts of the WPS are resistant to the types of changes recommended in the review, a charge Clunis also flatly denied.

Winnipeg Police Service Chief Devon Clunis METRO

"The Winnipeg Police Service is very open, very forward-thinking, (and is) looking forward to the results from the operational review," he said.

The final copy of the review expected to be presented to the mayor's executive policy committee next month.

SHANE GIBSON/METRO

Sinclair. Housekeeping, not nurses, called after man in ER threw up

A man who died during a lengthy wait in a hospital emergency room vomited on the floor during his final hours, but a security guard on duty said he assumed Brian Sinclair was intoxicated and "sleeping it off."

Alain Remillard told an inquest that a man in the waiting room at Winnipeg's Health Sciences Centre informed him that Sinclair had either thrown up or soiled himself. At that point, Sinclair was 24 hours into a 34-hour wait for care.

Remillard said he walked toward Sinclair, saw a clear liquid at the base of his wheelchair and called housekeeping to clean it up. Remillard said he assumed Sinclair had "peed himself" rather than vomited because the liquid was clear.

"I never spoke to him," the guard testified Thursday. "I was assuming at the time that he was sleeping. Since he posed no security threat, I didn't feel it was necessary to wake him up."

In cross-examination by the Sinclair family lawyer, Remillard said he noticed the man was dishevelled, aboriginal and a double amputee.

"At the time, I did assume he was somewhat intoxicated and sleeping it off," he said when pressed. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Albert Weber, 59, centre, lives with dementia caused by multiple sclerosis and has a history of wandering. His wife Celine, left, and daughter, Jacqueline, say the Project Lifesaver Manitoba electronic tracking bracelet he now wears gives the family peace of mind. SHANE GIBSON/METRO

Feds helping fund Project Lifesaver

Search and Rescue. New technology used to help find the wandering and disoriented in Manitoba

When a loved one living with a mental disability wanders away, seconds can mean the difference between life and death for those tasked with bringing them home.

That's why the head of the Winnipeg Police Service Ground Search and Rescue Unit wants those who care for people with conditions that can lead to wandering to know about Project Lifesaver Manitoba — and the electronic tracking device they use that's changing how searches happen.

"For clients we're now looking at searches going from hours and hours, to probably 15 to 20 minutes from the time we're on scene," explained Sgt. Randy Antonio, who created the force's search and rescue unit and has coordinated the team since 1999. "They can't walk faster than we can actually track them with this."

The device, a bracelet that can be worn on the wrist or ankle, transmits a unique radio frequency and allows searchers to quickly find the client using a receiver.

Online

For more information on Project Lifesaver Manitoba, and to donate money for families who could use the bracelets but can't afford them, go to projectlifesavermanitoba.ca.

Project Lifesaver Manitoba was set up through a partnership with city police, Winnipeg Search and Rescue, the Search and Rescue Manitoba's Advisory council and other community partners through a $46,000 grant from the federal government. Seven chronic wanderers have been using the devices for about a month, and for the family of 59-year-old Albert Weber, who lives with dementia caused by multiple sclerosis and wandered away for 20 hours in June, the bracelet has changed their lives.

"We don't know if he's gone north, east, west or south," explained Albert's wife Celine. "So to have someone who can come in and locate him so quickly is definitely a peace of mind."

The bracelets cost around $300 and are available to those who have a history of wandering. SHANE GIBSON/METRO

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High Five! Actor and social justice advocate George Takei will be in Winnipeg to narrate the Winnipeg Symphony Orchestra's Sci-Fi Spectacular concert at the end of September. Here are five other things I'd like him to narrate.

ELISHA DACEY
elisha.dacey@metronews.ca

5 narrations for George Takei

1 The Manitoba Throne Speech

The throne speech happens before every session at the Legislative building and outlines all the things the government says they're going to do before they degenerate into childish mudslinging and petty politics. I'd be much happier to listen to the speech if George Takei would read it. Bonus points if he says "Aye, captain," while rolling his eyes at the end.

2 The U of M Faculty of Arts convocation

Have you ever sat through a convocation ceremony where several hundred names are called? I have. It's a torturous affair that was made worse because I was sitting next to a girl who hated me in high school. Had George Takei been reading names in his golden voice, tho', I probably wouldn't have 'accidentally' stepped on her gown a few times.

3 The Winnipeg Blue Bomber's play-by-play

Admit it. It would be infinitely more fun this season to watch the Bombers if George Takei said "Oh myyyyy" every time a Bombers QB got hurt. It would happen a lot and it's very entertaining.

PHOTO ILLUSTRATIONS: ELISHA DACEY/METRO

4 City council finance committee meeting

For city council geeks like myself, council meetings are ridiculously good entertainment. For normal people, they are the opposite. I'm pretty sure only George Takei could make sci-fi geeks care, and I'd pay to see George Takei make a pun out of everything finance committee chair Russ Wyatt says.

5 The Canadian Museum for Human Rights exhibits

In honour of George Takei's unwavering human rights and social justice work, how fantastic would it be to have his voice lead you through the exhibits when it opens in 2014? As a survivor of a Japanese-American internment camp (which sadly happened in Canada, too), I think this is a no-brainer.

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Harper: 'Do I seem like I smoke marijuana?'

Justin Trudeau has done it. So have premiers Kathleen Wynne and Darrell Dexter.

And Toronto Mayor Rob Ford says he's smoked pot.

Almost everyone on the political scene seems to have tried it, except for Stephen Harper.

The prime minister chuckled during a media scrum on Thursday when asked if he, too, is part of the parade of politicians who have come out recently to concede they've smoked marijuana.

He took the opportunity to hammer Trudeau and the federal Liberals on the issue, accusing them of promoting pot use among children at the expense of developing an economic policy.

"Do I seem like I smoke marijuana?" Harper asked in response to a reporter's question.

Harper said his asthma precluded smoking. "From a very young age, I have been an asthmatic and smoking anything has been out of the question since the time I was very small," he said.

A cavalcade of cannabis confessions was prompted by Justin Trudeau's admission last week that he's smoked pot in the past. STEVE RUSSELL/TORSTAR NEWS SERVICE

The cavalcade of cannabis confessions was prompted by Trudeau's admission last week that he's smoked pot in the past, at least once since becoming an MP.

Chronic politics

Ontario's premier and Toronto's mayor also recently confessed that they have smoked marijuana.

- Premier Kathleen Wynne came clean about puffing pot "very, very infrequently" and stopping 35 years ago.
- Toronto Mayor Rob Ford Ford said, "Oh yeah, I won't deny that. I smoked a lot of it."

Harper repeated his earlier criticism of Trudeau, saying the Liberal leader "displayed poor judgment" with his marijuana use.

"I look at the contrast with him promoting marijuana use for our children versus saying yesterday he will have no economic policy for several years," Harper said.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

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Lianna McDonald, executive director of the Canadian Centre for Child Protection, left, and Justice Minister Peter MacKay look on as Prime Minister Stephen Harper speaks in Toronto on Thursday. FRANK GUNN/THE CANADIAN PRESS

PM proposes to crack down on child sex offences

Harsher penalties. Tories to introduce legislation aimed at keeping those who sexually exploit kids in prison longer

Quoted

"Sadly, there are truly evil people out there.... we don't understand them and we don't particularly care to."

Prime Minister Stephen Harper

Child sex offenders, particularly those who victimize several kids, could spend longer in prison under a range of harsher penalties proposed Thursday by the prime minister.

The Conservative government plans to introduce legislation this fall aimed at cracking down on people who sexually exploit children, Stephen Harper announced.

"Sadly, there are truly evil people out there. The fact is we don't understand them and we don't particularly care to. We understand only that they must be dealt with," Harper said at an event in Toronto.

"To protect our children we must create a justice system that is more responsive to victims and especially more responsive to children and to the families of children who have been victimized by sexual predators."

A main plank of the proposed amendments would see people convicted of more than one such offence serve their sentences consecutively, rather than the current system in which sentences are served concurrently.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Canucks in space?

Almost 7,000 Canadians want to live on Mars

A project that aims to put people on Mars in 10 years has fallen short of the expected number of Martian wannabes, but there is no shortage of Canadians willing to live on the red planet.

With the Aug. 31 deadline almost here, nearly 7,000 Canucks have applied to join Mars One — a $6-billion project that plans to establish a colony on Mars by 2023. THE CANADIAN PRESS

British Columbia

Raid uncovers nearly 200 guns

Police have seized nearly 200 guns in a remote area of B.C., arresting a man who investigators allege was purchasing weapons legally and then selling them to the highest bidder.

The province's Combined Forces Special Enforcement Unit announced the seizure Thursday, almost a week after raiding the home of a man in Tatla Lake, more than 300 kilometres north of Vancouver.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Saskatoon

Sunbather told by cops to put top on

Two sunbathers had different ideas of public nudity on Wednesday. Saskatoon woman Jenelyn Santos Ong tweeted, "I'm at the sandbar ... a woman is topless. What is the law on this?"

In the case of the woman, no charges were laid.

"We were able to convince the young woman to put her top back on," said police spokeswoman Kelsie Fraser.

JACOB MORGAN/METRO SASKATOON

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Britain opts out of involvement in military action against Syria

Stunning vote. With Britain out, following a vote by Parliament, the U.S. may still go it alone

An Israeli soldier directs a tank at the border between the Golan Heights and Syria. BERNAT ARMANGUE/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

President Barack Obama on Thursday prepared for the possibility of launching unilateral American military action against Syria within days as Britain opted out in a stunning vote by Parliament.

Facing skepticism at home, too, the administration shared intelligence with lawmakers aimed at convincing them the Syrian government used chemical weapons against its people and must be punished.

Despite roadblocks in forming an international coalition, Obama appeared undeterred and advisers said he would be willing to retaliate against Syria on his own.

"The president of the United States is elected with the duty to protect the national security interests in the United States of America," White House spokesman Josh Earnest said.

Even before the vote in London, the U.S. was preparing to act without formal authorization from the UN. Prime Minister David Cameron argued a military strike would be legal, but he faced deep pressure from lawmakers. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

On military intervention...

Canada is 'reluctant convert': PM

Stephen Harper

Canada has no plans for a military intervention in Syria but supports its allies who are contemplating forceful action against that country's regime, Prime Minister Stephen Harper said Thursday.

Harper admitted that lack of international action in light of the apparent use of chemical weapons would set an "extremely dangerous precedent," but added his government has been reluctant on the idea of a western strike.

"Our government has been a very reluctant convert to the idea that there needs to be some western military action regarding the Syrian situation," he said Thursday in Toronto.

"At the present time the government of Canada has no plans, we have no plans of our own to have a Canadian military mission."

Harper said the conflict in Syria is "sectarian in nature" and doesn't appear to have any "ideal or obvious outcomes" for a solution.

He added that Canada stands behind other powers weighing the possibility of a mission. THE CANADIAN PRESS

Winnipeg Transit Fall Service
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SHOPPERS DRUG MART

Did Kim Jong-un have former flame executed?

North Korea. High-profile singer, allegedly part of Kim dynasty's notorious 'Joy Squad,' turns up dead

KIERON MONKS
Metro World News in London

Twelve people were reportedly executed in North Korea this month on pornography charges. Among them was high-profile singer Hyon Song-wol, a rumoured former lover of the Supreme Leader Kim Jong-un, with many observers suggesting she paid the ultimate price for causing embarrassment.

Hyon Song-wol YOUTUBE

Her case is typical of a culture of sleaze surrounding the leader, North Korean sources told Metro. "Kim Jong-un met and fell in love with Ms. Hyon at a 'Joy Squad' party," a former regime official from Pyongyang said. "She accompanied Kim Jong-un on his business trips to rural areas to spend romantic time alone."

The affair did not last long and the leader now has two "official" women, the insider said, despite the recent birth of a son by Ri Sol-ju, a musician with whom Kim has been able to cultivate a modern image.

The "Joy Squad" is a notorious institution that is part of the Kim family dynasty. "They were royal palaces full of masseurs, dancers, musicians, prostitutes and exotic foreign imports," Jasper Beckett, North Korea expert and author of Rogue Regime, told Metro.

"It's very likely that Kim Jong-un has continued like his father, who had numerous wives and mistresses."

The author goes on to add that previous flings have been exiled or worse.

Taliban escalate attacks in Afghanistan

New Afghan army recruits stand in formation during a graduation ceremony at the Afghan National Army base on the outskirts of Kabul, Afghanistan. Taliban insurgents staged an evening mountain-pass ambush on an Afghan police convoy patrolling a key highway, killing 15 officers and wounding 10 in western Afghanistan's Farah province, a provincial official said Thursday, the latest in a string of escalating insurgent attacks around the country. AHMAD JAMSHID/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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Safety first

Wildfire crews are trained to follow LACES at all times.

- **Lookouts.** One crew member, communicating with their supervisor, watches the fire from an advantageous position and constantly keeps an eye out for sudden changes that could endanger firefighters on the ground.
- **Anchor points.** A location protected from fire spread from which to start building a fire break or line. Prevents a fire from spreading beyond that point.
- **Communications.** A team must keep in constant communication so crews can concentrate on their job and identify hazards before it's too late.
- **Escape routes.** Predetermined routes that can be used to get crews to safety in case a fire becomes a danger to the team.
- **Safety zones.** Creating cleared, open zones within the site where crews can take refuge from danger.

Source: Canadian Forest Service

Tools to tame wildfires

1 Chainsaw. Clearing hazards

Used for clearing fuel from sites and clearing hazards from a forest fire.

2 Hoses & pumps. Prevention

After a water source is found, crews wet areas to prevent the spread of fire and then move in on the fire.

3 Shovel. Firebreaks

Used for constructing firebreaks, digging hose lines, trenches and barriers.

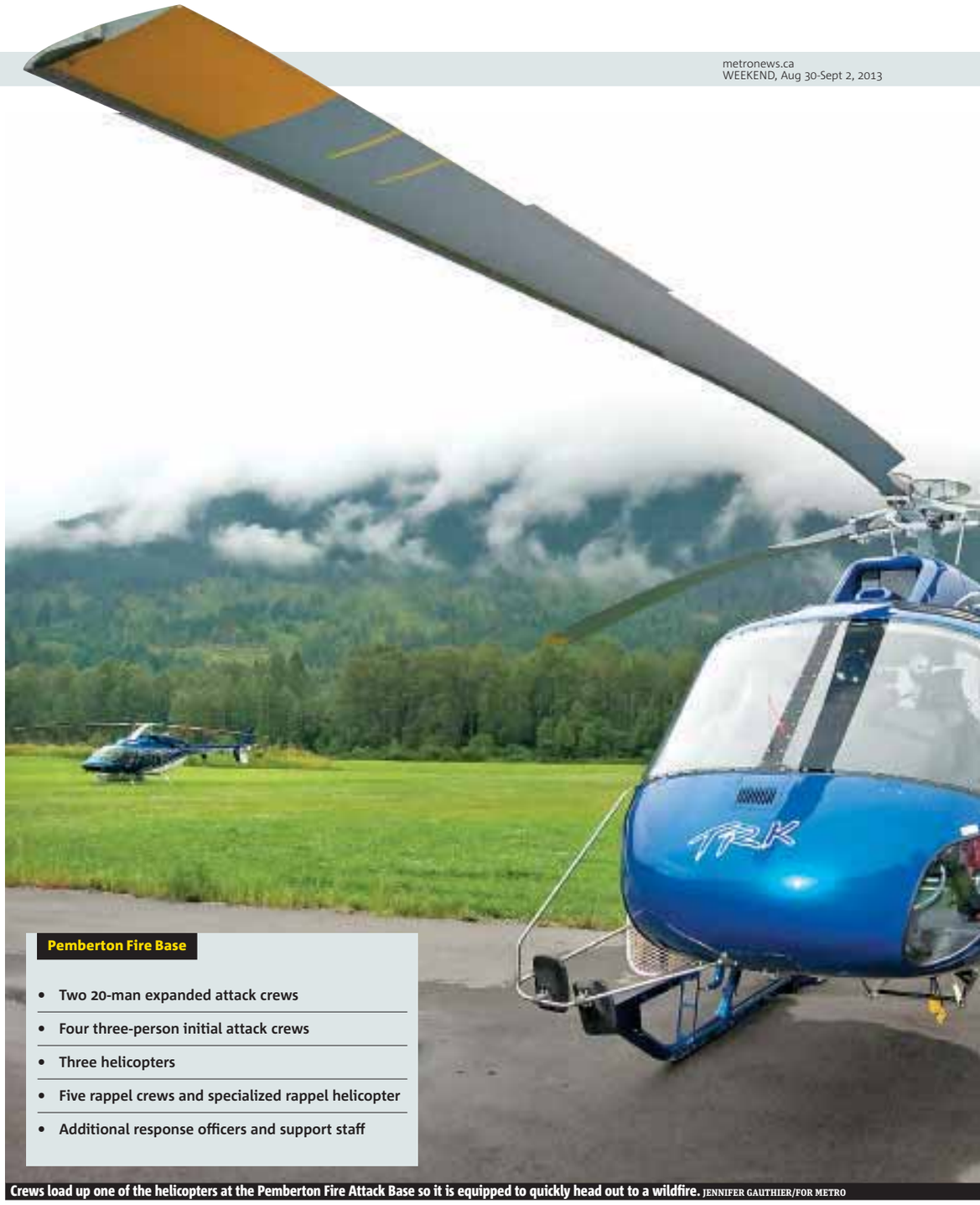
4 Pulaski. The go-to tool

Used to construct firebreaks. It can be used as an axe for cutting and also to dig soil.

5 Drip torches. Controlled burn

Used to start small, controlled fires to burn up any fuel before a wildfire gets to that area.

PHOTOS: 1-4: JENNIFER GAUTHIER/FOR METRO; 5: COURTESY B.C. WILDFIRE MANAGEMENT BRANCH; TEXT: MATT KIELTYKA/METRO IN VANCOUVER



Pemberton Fire Base

- Two 20-man expanded attack crews
- Four three-person initial attack crews
- Three helicopters
- Five rappel crews and specialized rappel helicopter
- Additional response officers and support staff

Crews load up one of the helicopters at the Pemberton Fire Attack Base so it is equipped to quickly head out to a wildfire. JENNIFER GAUTHIER/FOR METRO

Heatseekers. Well-trained wildfire crews ready to attack forests smouldering for a fight

MATT KIELTYKA
Metro in Vancouver

Red flash after red flash lit up a real-time map of British Columbia as reports came in.

A record dry-spell in July meant that on Aug. 2, most of the province was under an "extreme" wildfire danger rating.

People in the outdoors weren't allowed any open flame or campfires and already-frowned-upon behaviour — such as casually flicking a cigarette — was now criminal.

But on this day, Mother Nature was the one doing the damage. A hundred new wildfires were recorded as the first storm system in more than a month swept through southern B.C., its flashes of lightning igniting the parched, tinder-dry forests overnight.

The Heatseekers Unit of Pemberton's Fire Attack Base — located just north of Whistler in the province's Coastal Fire Centre — had preloaded one of its three helicopters stationed at the base.

Armed with axes, shovels, chainsaws and hoses, the 20-man unit was ready to rush into nature's inferno at a moment's notice.

Just not at this particular moment.

While crews were attacking fires throughout the province, the remnants of the previous night's storm made it impossible for Pemberton units to get clearance to fly in the morning, with the imposing Mount Currie next to the airfield completely obscured by the cloud cover.

"There's a lot of anticipation in fire season. Sometimes the hardest part is not being on fires," says Heatseekers unit supervisor Joe Lax, 34, whose flat-brimmed baseball cap and youthful appearance mask years of extensive wildfire experience.

It's only the hardest part if you don't think too much about the long days covered in dirt while working furiously with heavy equipment to contain a hellish blaze as it spreads from one treetop to another overhead. It's not a job for the easily intimidated, or for those afraid to get dirt under their fingernails (and just about everywhere else).

"There's a bit of glory to it, but most times it's just getting dirty. It's not easy on the body," says Lax. "We are in there for the long haul, start to finish.

"Sometimes we go in there and establish hose lays, we do a lot of burn-off with drip torches to mitigate the fuel between us and the fire. We do line locate for heavy machinery to build guard around bigger fires and go right down to mop-up, where we use pulaskis and dig up smoldering debris on the ground and put it out."

Given the job description, it's no wonder the majority of the red shirts toiling away at Pemberton Fire Attack Base seem to be extremely fit outdoorsmen and women in their 20s and 30s.

They're full on energy, jokes

SOME LIKE IT HOT

and a dash of bravado at home base — the last of which goes out the window as soon as they arrive on the doorstep of a raging wildfire.

It's all about safety (first and foremost), structure and professionalism.

"There's a huge sense of responsibility," says Lax. "You're working within the public trust. There's always excitement when you fly in to a fire for the first time but your headspace has to be all about having a plan and working together. For most guys, they just want to get out there and go to work. Fear doesn't enter into it."

Listening to Heatseekers describe running headfirst into a wildfire is less Hollywood and more tax audit: Technical, serious and, surprisingly, a bit dull.

A wildfire may seem like pure chaos to the untrained soul, but every crew member that attacks one has a highly detailed game plan before they ever set out on a call.

They're in constant communication and each firefighter knows the nature of the fire, the weather and wind conditions, what the topography is and where exits are if things ever get unmanageable.

Wildfire co-ordination officers Toni Large and Rob Dombrowsky — the elder statesmen on base — make sure of it.

The two run the daily briefings and set up the plans for crews heading into the wild.

As the ones responsible for their crew's safety, they were hit as hard as anyone when news broke that 19 members of the Granite Mountain Hotshots in Arizona (the American equivalent of the Heatseekers) died after being entrapped by a wildfire June 30.

"We have 20-person crews. We know every one of these people. We lunch with them, we talk, we have interpersonal relationships with all of them. To have something like that happen … our hearts go out to all of them; it's a terrible thing," says Dombrowsky.

The disaster sparked a province-wide safety review.

"We had a safety meeting with our supervisors to discuss LACES (see sidebar) and fatigue management," says Large. "It was an opportunity for us to remind ourselves of the safety program. Responder safety is first. We have procedures in place for a reason, to avoid that kind of entrapment."

"They have to come home at the end of the day," adds Dombrowsky.

A helicopter starts a controlled burn behind an evacuated home in an attempt to reduce the amount of fuel for a wildfire burning on Mount McLean in Lillooet, B.C., in this 2009 photo. DARRYL DYCK/THE CANADIAN PRESS FILE

Think you've got what it takes to go to blazes?

Have you got enough fire in your belly to become a wildland firefighter?

You're going to need a lot more than that.

It's one of the toughest, meanest, most dangerous jobs in the country, so the people who take it on have to be the very best.

The test for qualifying as a wildland firefighter has the snappy title of the Canadian Physical Performance Exchange Standard. It's shortened to the code WFX-FIT and that translates into one word: Sweat.

"It's no picnic," is the very direct warning in the Ministry of Natural Resources guide to qualifying. One training company's guide sums it up: "The job is the test and the test is the job." It's all based on the real world and the real world is tough.

On the web

Go to metronews.ca for more on Canada's extreme firefighters:

- **Photos.** See a gallery of the Pemberton Fire Attack Base crew at work
- **Read.** Pine beetle threat extends east
- **Map.** A look at wildland firefighter crews across Canada
- **Timeline.** An interactive look at some of the world's worst forest fires

WFX-FIT

- Carry pump on back: 160 metres including ramp eight times
- Hand carry pump: 80 metres
- Hose pack lift and carry on back: 1km, including ramp 50 times
- Charged hose advance: 80 metres

Here's the challenge:

After passing a stringent medical before they can even try out, candidates take on a 40-metre circuit at one of six training centres in Northern Ontario.

First they do it with a 28.5 kg pump on their back — four times around the 40 metres, including a steep ramp each time. Then they repeat it twice with the pump in their arms. Then they grab a 25 kg pack with hoses and carry it for a kilometre. Yes, a kilometre, plus the ramp every 20 metres. That means 50 hills to conquer.

It takes mettle to do this: A parattack firefighter from the Prince George Fire Centre comes in for a landing after leaping from a specialized DC-3 aircraft. COURTESY B.C. WILDFIRE MANAGEMENT BRANCH

Then it gets really tough.

The would-be firefighter drags an 80 kg sled for two 40-metre laps, to simulate dragging a hose towards a fire.

Think you could do it?

Well, there's a catch: You only have 17 minutes and 15 seconds to do it or, to meet the standard for transfers between provinces, 14 minutes and 30 seconds. Ouch.

Still standing?

We'd like to shake your hand.

MIKE DONACHIE/METRO IN LONDON, ONT.

Economy. Japan showing 'positive signs of recovery'

Japan's economic recovery gained momentum in July, as manufacturing accelerated and consumer prices rose for a second straight month, despite weaker household spending and retail sales.

The data released Friday showed the consumer price index rose 0.7 per cent in July from a year earlier, for the second straight month of gains. That suggests efforts to break free of years of demand-dampening deflation are progressing. The CPI rose 0.2 per cent in June.

However, the core index, which excludes food and energy prices, fell 0.1 per cent.

The Ministry of Economy, Trade and Industry said industrial output rose 1.6 per cent from a year earlier but 3.2 per cent from the month before, in a sign the recovery is taking hold. It forecasts further expansion in August and September.

"Income and other data show quite positive signs of recovery," said Junko Nishioka, an economist at RBS Japan Securities.

The government has boosted spending and pushed for ultra-loose monetary policies aimed at generating inflation. It says that will perk up demand and, in response, investment and jobs. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Market Minute

DOLLAR
94.96¢ US (-0.41¢)

TSX
12,704.73 (+97.51)

OIL
$108.80 US (-$1.30)

GOLD
$1,412.90 US (-$5.90)

Natural gas: $3.62 (+3.6)
Dow Jones: 14,840.95 (+ 16.44)

Can I have a raise with that?

Fast-food workers protested Thursday in U.S. cities, including New York, Chicago and Detroit, with organizers expecting the biggest national walkouts yet in a demand for higher wages. The nationwide day of demonstrations came after similar actions organized by unions and community groups recently. Workers are calling for the right to unionize without interference from employers and for pay of $15 an hour. DAVID COATES/DETROIT NEWS/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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Netflix makes users guinea pigs

HIPPOs out, guineas in. Video-streaming service tests its ideas on viewers, whether they realize it or not

Want to be a guinea pig for Netflix, get early access to new features and help shape how the video-streaming service grows and evolves?

If you're a relatively new subscriber, you may already be a beta tester. Or perhaps you used to be.

At any given time Netflix is conducting hundreds of tests across its website and other platforms. Some are based on bold new ideas and are immediately obvious to its test subjects, while others are being run invisibly beneath the user interface.

Users who have been with Netflix since the company launched in Canada in September 2010 aren't likely to be in on the testing, but newer members almost certainly are, whether they realize it or not, said Netflix's chief product officer Neil Hunt.

"One of our limited resources is users to try out new ideas, so I would say it's the unusual individual who doesn't end up in some kind of test at some point," said Hunt.

"Most testing is done with brand new users who don't have learned behaviours to unlearn, that gives us the cleanest read, and so the typical new user coming in will end up in half a dozen or a dozen different test experiences, most of which will be very trivial and minor and invisible."

A year's worth of testing culminated in the recent release of Netflix's Profiles feature, which allows users to create multiple log-ins within the same account.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Stats vs. top brass

- Netflix relies on the statistics generated by user tests to inform its decisions, chief product officer Neil Hunt said, rather than following the so-called "HIPPO" philosophy.
- That acronym stands for "highest paid person's opinion" and refers to an organization's preference to make top-down decisions.

iTunes FESTIVAL

Lady Gaga
September 1

Paramore
September 4

Justin Timberlake
September 29

Katy Perry
September 30

30 days of free music

Every day in September, watch free live shows on iTunes from Justin Timberlake, Lady Gaga, Katy Perry, Elton John, Vampire Weekend, Kings of Leon, and more.

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Metronews.ca/iTunesFestival
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News worth sharing.

The iTunes Festival

The iTunes Festival is one of the highlights of the concert season -- and Metro can take you there. If going to jolly old London to party as music superstars like Justin Timberlake, Lady Gaga, Katy Perry and Queens of the Stone Age shake the stage is your idea of heaven, Metro can make that dream come true.

Thirty days of wicked fun kickoff on Sept. 1, with more than 60 artists playing live at the renowned Roundhouse in London. The Roundhouse opened in 1846 with very different beginnings -- a steam engine repair centre. Over the years, it took different paths; eventually becoming what is now a legendary performance hall hosting the likes of Pink Floyd, Led Zeppelin and Jimi Hendrix.

Since the iTunes Festival launched in 2007, it has carried on the tradition of stellar performances, bringing in mega stars like Adele, Coldplay and the Foo Fighters. Aside from the artists already mentioned, this year's lineup runs the gamut from Sir Elton John to Kings of Leon, the Lumineers to Chic featuring Nile Rodgers – something for all musical passions.

Experience it Live with the World

Watch performances in real-time with the rest of the world by streaming them in HD quality every day in September at 4 p.m. ET/1 p.m. PT. You can watch on your computer, download the official iTunes Festival app to watch on your iPhone, iPad or iPod touch -- or watch on the big screen through Apple TV. For a limited time after the gig, performances will be available on iTunes on-demand.

Experience the festival with people around the world by following #iTunesFestival on Twitter.

The only way to get access to the event is to win tickets. Metro has them!
Check out the back page for details on how to enter for a chance to win. Throughout the month, Metro will have gig reviews and reminders on performances. Keep reading for the latest news.

The Lineup

Performances air at 4 p.m. ET/1 p.m. PT on iTunes or the official app. Miss the show? No worries, watch it on demand for a limited time after.

SEPT 1 | Lady Gaga

SEPT 2 | Sigur Rós [OPENER: POLIÇA]

SEPT 3 | The Lumineers [OPENER: Phox]

SEPT 4 | Paramore [OPENER: Fenech-Soler]

SEPT 5 | Rizzle Kicks [OPENER: Eliza Doolittle]

SEPT 6 | Queens of the Stone Age [OPENER: Palma Violets]

SEPT 7 | Phoenix [OPENER: Little Green Cars]

SEPT 8 | Bastille [OPENER: The 1975]

SEPT 9 | Arctic Monkeys [OPENER: Drenge]

SEPT 10 | Jake Bugg [OPENER: Valerie June]

SEPT 11 | Kings of Leon [OPENER: Jimmy Eat World]

SEPT 12 | Elton John [OPENER: Tom Odell]

SEPT 13 | Avicii [OPENER: Henrik B]

SEPT 14 | Chic Featuring Nile Rodgers [OPENER: Janelle Monáe]

SEPT 15 | Vampire Weekend [OPENER: The Olms]

SEPT 16 | Jack Johnson [OPENER: Bahamas]

SEPT 17 | Ludovico Einaudi [OPENER: Agnes Obel]

SEPT 18 | Thirty Seconds To Mars [OPENER: The Family Rain]

SEPT 19 | Kendrick Lamar [OPENER: Schoolboy Q]

SEPT 20 | Primal Scream [OPENER: Skinny Girl Diet]

SEPT 21 | HAIM [OPENER: Gabrielle Aplin. Bipolar Sunshine. Dan Croll]

SEPT 22 | Ellie Goulding [OPENER: Laura Welsh]

SEPT 23 | Jessie J [OPENER: Lawson]

SEPT 24 | Robin Thicke [OPENER: Aloe Blacc]

SEPT 25 | Pixies [OPENER: NO CEREMONY///]

SEPT 26 | Tinie Tempah [OPENER: Naughty Boy]

SEPT 27 | Dizzee Rascal

SEPT 28 | John Legend

SEPT 29 | Justin Timberlake [OPENER: Mikky Ekko]

SEPT 30 | Katy Perry [OPENER: Iggy Azalea. Icona Pop]

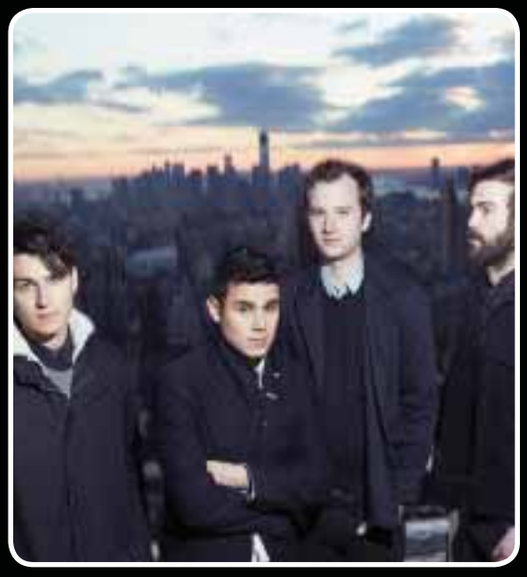
Mother monster to her brood of evangelical fans, Lady Gaga is one of the most dramatic entertainers to hit the world stage in recent years. Starting with a showcase at New York's The Cutting Room in 2006, Gaga has gone on to be an international sensation thanks to albums like The Fame Monster and Born this Way, and her recently released song Applause.

Sealing its longevity with the 2008 hit Use Somebody, King of Leon's has expanded its southern rock sound over the years to become a critical and commercial success. The jewel in Leon's award-winning crown is the collaboration of brothers Nathan, Jared and Caleb Followill with their cousin Matthew. The band's sixth studio album, Mechanical Bull, is slated for release this September.

This sexy R&B crooner known for his controversial "Blurred Lines" is no stranger to the bright lights of Hollywood, having grown up in the spotlight as the son of actor Alan Thicke. Fast forward a few years and the American Music Award nominee is a star in his own right now.

Not even a Suit & Tie can cramp the cred of Justin Timberlake. JT went from clean-cut Disney star to successfully stepping in sync as a boy bander before bringing SexyBack as a solo artist. Add a scene-stealing movie career to the mix and you have the making of a long and lucrative career.

The only artist to spend 69 consecutive weeks in the top ten of Billboards' Hot 100, Katy Perry is a musical force to behold. From the irreverent I Kissed a Girl to the self-empowering Firework, she has earned her placed as one today's most beloved and sought-after performers, with fans eagerly awaiting her new album, Prism.



Vampire Weekend
September 15

Thirty Seconds to Mars
September 18

Robin Thicke
September 24

You and a friend. London, England. The biggest concert of the year.

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CONTRARY TO CONTRACEPTION

THE METRO LIST

Mike Benhaim
metronews.ca

1 **Ain't no party like a Québécois Parti.** PQ Leader Pauline Marois says the "Charter of Quebec Values," will reflect "universal" as well as Quebec values and will unify the people. Banning religious headgear in the workplace is just one small step in a brilliant plan to deflecting all existing racial tension toward the greater common threat: Non-francophones.

2 **On the prowl.** Victoria police issued an alert to citizens after reports of a large cougar on the loose. Experts warn the animal could be isolated and irritable. Residents say that it's rare to find a cougar in these parts. You usually have to go to one of those bars out in the suburbs.

3 **Surprise!** Health Canada issued a recall this week for Freya-28, an oral contraceptive being used by thousands of Canadian women, when it was discovered that some packages contained placebos in place of the active pills. Now, there's nothing funny about this except that faulty drugs usually result in the loss of life, whereas these side effects could last a whole lot longer.

4 **Designated driver.** Breaking news on self-driving cars reveal that Google is producing a fleet of "robo-taxis." Terrific news for lovers who want some privacy, and for those who are really drunk, the car is equipped with robotics. Upon reaching your destination, the car will slap you awake, eject you from the seat and dispense harsh verbal judgments.

5 **NASA in a nutshell.** Ice in the Arctic continues to melt while seas in the Middle East shrink. Ideas of redistributing water come up but are far too complex, especially with NASA resources being spent on a study that will allow astronauts to hibernate during their nine-month trip to Mars. I am not making any of this up.

6 **Bait.** Conservationist and shark defender Lesley Rochat swam among the big fish wearing just a bikini. Rochat said she wanted to be as vulnerable as possible, and boasts that she has not been bitten yet. Viral photos of the attractive Rochat have led me to my latest theory: Sharks are gay. She better hope I'm right.

7 **Talk to the hand.** Researchers at the University of Washington have successfully connected two human brains over the Internet. One scientist sent a brain signal to a colleague at a separate location, controlling his hand movement. This is a magnificent scientific breakthrough, but I just know it will eventually become some household toy for boys with which to terrorize their younger siblings.

8 **Blurred lines.** In an attempt to shed her Hannah Montana persona, Miley Cyrus reinvented herself for the VMAs last Sunday. Now, call me old-fashioned, but as much as the classic, teenie-bikini/foam-finger combo screams artistic growth, if I were her, I might have just gone with music lessons.

9 **This week in music.** In 1975, KC and the Sunshine Band scored their first U.S. No. 1 hit with a song that introduced the phrase, "Do a little dance, make a little love, get down tonight." 38 years later, we still get to see grandma act out the lyrics at every wedding and bar mitzvah. Only now, she may actually be dating KC.

Follow The Metro List on Twitter @TheMetroList

ZOOM

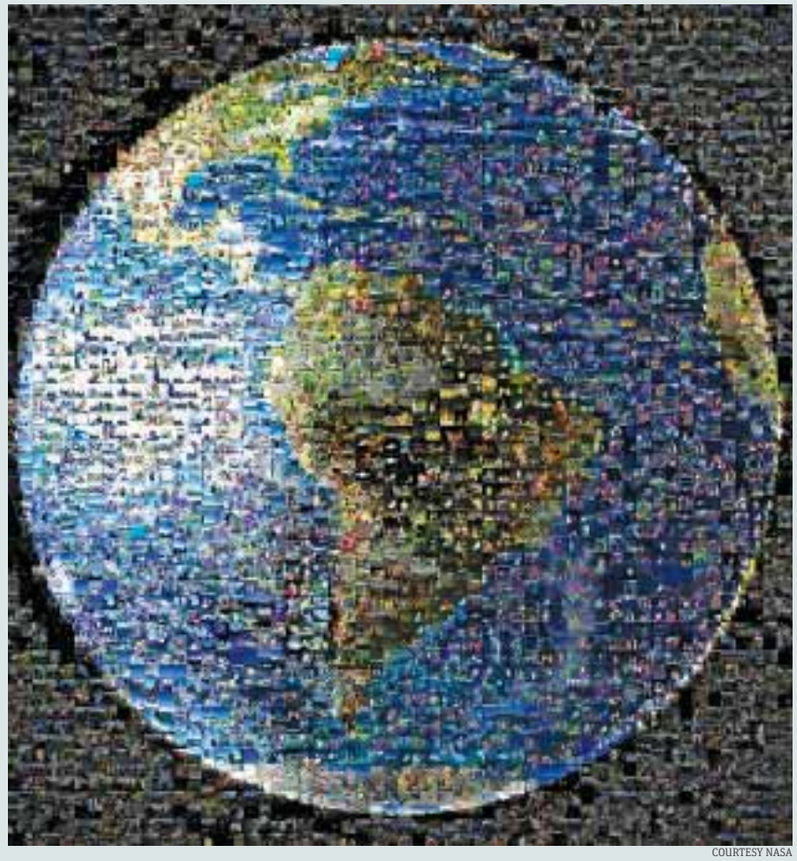
What do you have to send to Saturn?

Smile! A thousand selfies compiled

NASA's Cassini spacecraft has been mapping the Solar System from Saturn, and this was the result when they asked civilians to take part.

Thousands participated in the Wave at Saturn event on July 19, taking selfies of their tributes to the mission. This collage combines the photos they sent as a tribute to the spacecraft's image of Earth. METRO

A close-up of the compilation.



COURTESY NASA

Down to Earth

1,400

The total number of pictures used in the mosaic. NASA reported that contributions arrived from more than 40 countries and 30 U.S. states.

Clickbait

ANDREW FIFIELD
andrew.fifield@metronews.ca

Sure, Twitter can be a fine source of news and highly-stylized photos from around the world. But more importantly, it's a rich source of jokes from shockingly sharp minds. Here's three frequently strange and dependably funny accounts.

@abusitron:
Your number one source for jokes about using deer to engineer a McDonald's burger heist or musically-inclined druids using Stonehenge as a stage for cover versions of '90s dance anthems. Bonus points for being a Canadian.

@tastefactory:
Come for the AVI that resembles a photo commemorating a kitten's first day at school, stay for the excellent puns on sepia-toned cultural references.

@crushingbort:
Aside from being hilarious, RTs from this account are a big reason why my following number is too damn high. Sample tweet: "I wonder how many of the people I follow are accounts that have been taken over by funnier muggers."

Twitter

@metropicks asked: The N.S. premier is latest politician to admit to smoking pot. Do you care if elected officials toke?

@Canucklehead_ca: I'm more suspicious of those who claimed they didn't. Statistics don't lie, politicians do. Oh, and pass the chips dude.

@MiaAdinaVida: Everyone does it- don't get why it's such a big deal!- it's 2013, people shouldn't be surprised anymore!

@Alannafawn84: I rather them smoke weed it will only make them want to eat and not steal and maybe have better ideas.

@sleuth_4_truths: I care that they are honest. Maybe if all NS politicians had a pot party this election stuff (#nspoli) would be more civil.

@veryboeing: When it's illegal yes. When it's legal, no. But they will say anything to get your vote.

@WelderAnge: well I'm thinking drug use may explain something... They don't call it dope cause it makes ya smart.

Follow @metropicks and take part in our daily poll.

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU: Send us your comments: winnipegletters@metronews.ca

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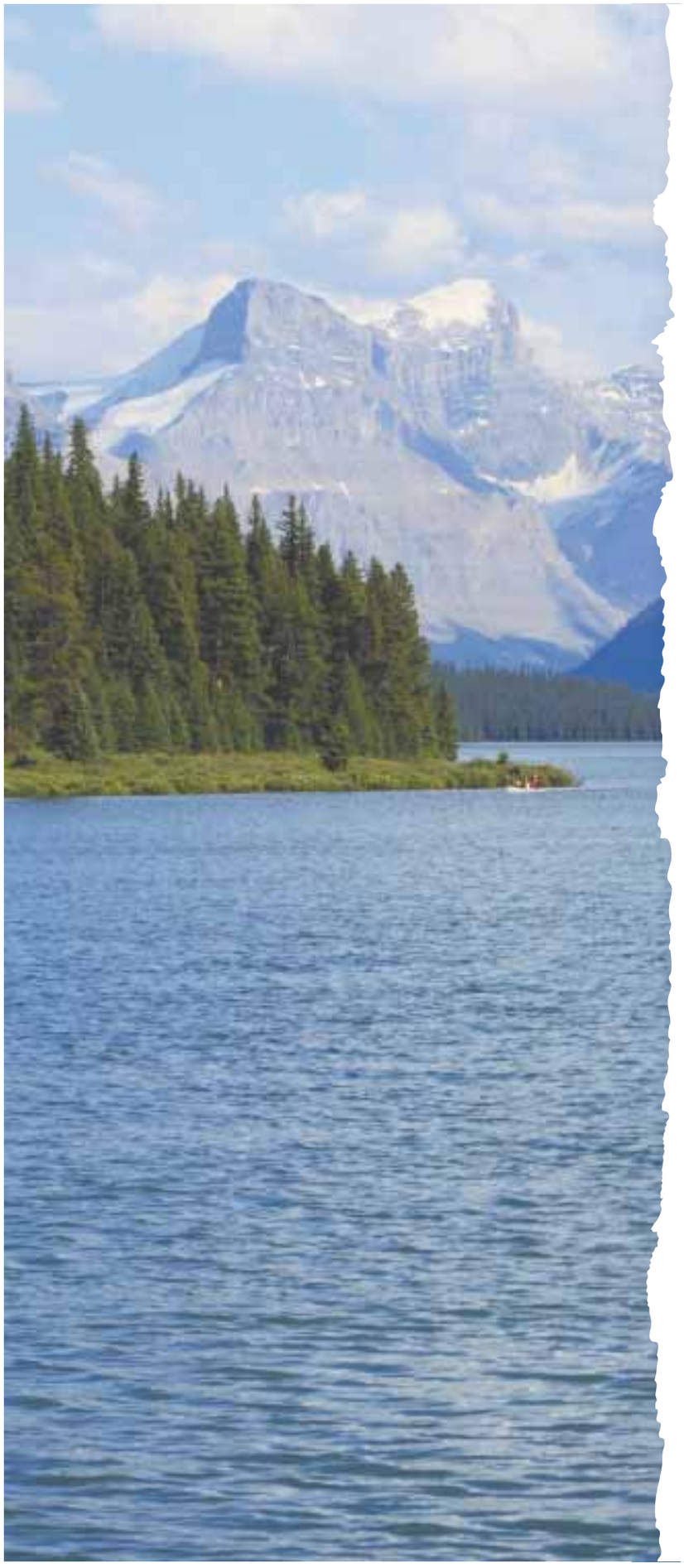

If the government let a giant foreign corporation buy up half of Canada's water, you would be outraged.

Then why are we letting them buy half of Canada's newest prime airwaves?

Like water, Canada's airwaves are a limited, precious national resource. So precious, that the government auctions them off for billions of dollars. Now, the Canadian government's auction rules will allow a giant foreign cellphone corporation to buy 2 of these 4 prime blocks – half the total! The cellphone companies most Canadians use can only buy 1 block, leaving you at a disadvantage.

This rule could put half of this national resource under foreign ownership and control. Canadians should be outraged. In fact, the results are in and 81% of Canadians said no to special treatment for foreign corporations.*

Find out more at FairForCanada.ca

This is a bad call for all Canadians.

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*Source: Nanos Research Survey, August 2013

Synopsis

Former race-car driver Brent Magna (Ethan Hawke) comes home to find his apartment trashed and his wife gone. As he tries to wrap his head around what happened, a cellphone rings. A mysterious voice directs him to a car park where he is to steal a souped-up Shelby Super Snake car and perform a number of duties or his wife will be killed. Complicating matters is The Kid (Selena Gomez), a rich kid who comes along for the ride.

- Richard: ●○○○○
- Mark: ●●○○○

Ethan Hawke may regret making this movie, but it will be the woeful acting of Selena Gomez that Getaway will be remembered for. CONTRIBUTED

Make quick Getaway from this cinematic car crash

Reel Guys

RICHARD CROUSE AND MARK BRESLIN

Abysmal auto movie. In this dire high-speed kidnapping tale Hawke tries his best but he is weighed down by the 'performance' of teen songstress Gomez

Richard: Mark, the movie starts promisingly with a five-minute sequence. It effectively sets up the story in true cinematic fashion — show me, don't tell me — but then quickly becomes what we call in the film criticism business a S.D.M. (Silly Damn Movie). OK, I made that last part up, but I couldn't really think of any other category to place this movie under. Maybe E.S.D.M. (Extremely Silly Damn Movie). What do you think? Is it just a mindless popcorn movie or is it just mindless?

Mark: Richard, did you miss the trenchant political allegory about late-period capitalism? Well, me too. But if it's car crashes you're after, look no further. I liked the set-up of this movie, enough so that I was interested in it to the halfway mark. And then, there were... more car crashes. And because the movie takes place in Bulgaria, the cars that were crashed were kind of small and cheap. To get me excited about car crashes, I need to see some totalled Beemers and Mercs in flames. Quantity is not quality. Anyway, the real car crash here is the unbelievable relationship between Ethan Hawke and Selena Gomez.

RC: Hawke does the job, I doubt he'll ever think about this movie again once the cheque clears. But Gomez? Let's just say it's quite possible she is even more annoying as an actress than she is as a singer. Her "performance" consists of pouting, grimacing and saying things like, "I'm totally screwed." If you want to know what she's like without paying to see the movie, go to any mall on a Saturday and eavesdrop at any American Apparel store.

MB: Hawke is my favourite actor of the '90s generation. But doesn't Ryan Gosling have some kind of a deal to play every race-car driver with an existential dilemma? And there are almost no other actors in the film — just some shots of chins on cellphones. So Gomez is onscreen almost all the time, crowding the action with her annoying baby fat. By the way, whoever heard of a Bulgarian merchant bank?

RC: Bulgarians, that's who. If the movie had lived up to the promise of the scene, it might have been a fun ride, but it runs out of gas after the first five minutes.

MB: And yet, I found it had some kind of cheap kinetic energy that I couldn't completely write off. Or maybe I could, if I used a Bulgarian accountant.

SCENE

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Bye, bye summer blockbusters

Fall preview. It's back to school time, the weather is getting cooler and the leaves are turning — what better time to hide out in a movie theatre?

MATT PRIGGE
Metro World News in New York

Vin Diesel is back in another Riddick movie this fall. CONTRIBUTED

Riddick (Sept. 6)

What: Vin Diesel wasn't yet a star like he is now when 2000's lean Pitch Black came out, and was stuck in a valley during the bloated 2004 spin-off The Chronicles of Riddick. Now that he's back — or at least back in a franchise he once tried to abandon — all's good, presumably.

Why: Series director David Twohy has long been making genre films, and as of The Perfect Getaway has finally gotten good at them. That this runs less than two hours is a good sign.

Why not: Sorry, but Pitch Black is just so-so. And headline writers have at least three ways to make puns out of the name (Worthy of 'Riddick'-ule — you can have that one). This also features a character named Lord Siberius Vaako.

Will get an Oscar for: Best animation of the clearly tired and aging Vin Diesel

The Family (Sept. 13)

What: Eurotrash auteur Luc Besson (The Fifth Element, Taken) sucks up Robert De Niro, Michelle Pfeiffer and Tommy Lee Jones (plus executive producer Martin Scorsese) into his orbit. The first two play parents in a family hiding from a mob boss they snitched on.

Why: Besson is probably the last person with big money making genuinely insane blockbusters.

Why not: Besson's movies are stupid. Sometimes this isn't a good thing.

Will get an Oscar for: Best Robert De Niro performance of fall 2013. (He's also in Last Vegas, American Hustle and Grudge Match.)

Insidious 2 (Sept. 13)

What: The second horror film from Saw's James Wan starring Patrick Wilson in two months — after The Conjuring — is a sequel to another Wan-Wilson hit from 2009, one concerning an evil spirit that is (get this) insidious.

Why: Wan — soon of Fast & Furious 7, or however it will be titled — is getting better and better at old school frights.

Why not: There are no such things as ghosts and movies like this keep people, even smart people, thinking there are.

Will get an Oscar for: Best James Wan film of the quarter.

Prisoners (Sept. 20)

What: Hugh Jackman plays a small town carpenter who kidnaps the creepy man (Paul Dano) he thinks kidnapped his six-year-old daughter and her best friend.

Why: Jackman is a talented actor who excels at playing tortured brooders. There's also Viola Davis, Maria Bello, Terrence Howard and Melissa Leo to help him.

Why not: With his Oscar-nominated Incendies, Canadian director Denis Villeneuve sucked much of the idiosyncrasy out of Wajdi Mouawad's play Scorched. This seems to be a heavy, humourless, obvious portrait of obsession and false justice.

Will get an Oscar for: Least joyful film of 2013.

What to watch in October:

Gravity promises to be 3D-licious. CONTRIBUTED

- **Gravity (Oct 4).** Alfonso Cuaron finally follows up 2006's Children of Men with this 3D extravaganza about the plight of two astronauts (George Clooney and Sandra Bullock) dancing around outside Earth's orbit — and literally no one else.
- **Runner Runner (Oct 4).** Justin Timberlake plays a student who loses all his money on online poker and decides to double down on stupidity by confronting the guy who runs it (Ben Affleck).
- **Captain Phillips (Oct 11).** Earlier this year, adventurous audiences got the Danish A Hijacking, concerning a ship overtaken by Somali pirates. Here's the big budgeted American edition (albeit not a remake), starring Tom Hanks as real-life abductee Richard Phillips.
- **Machete Kills (Oct 11).** The first Machete — with Danny Trejo as an ex-Federali vigilante slicing up racists — wasn't such a hit. But after Kick-Ass, why let limp box offices halt a sequel, particularly one with Lady Gaga and off-screen racist Mel Gibson?
- **12 Years a Slave (Oct 18).** Avant-garde artist Steve McQueen (as opposed to the late superstar) goes big with this adaptation of the memoir of Solomon Northup (played by Chiwetel Ejiofor), a freed slave sold back into slavery.
- **Carrie (Oct 18).** The Stephen King classic, already immortalized by Brian De Palma in 1976, gets yet another update, this time with Chloe Grace Moretz and Julianne Moore as her crazy religious mom.

Action/Biography

The Grandmaster

Director. Wong Kar-Wai

Stars. Tony Leung, Zhang Ziyi

The life of the legendary Chinese martial-arts master Ip Man gets an appropriately mythical treatment in The Grandmaster, the comeback film from Hong Kong auteur Wong Kar-Wai. Working in the same fluid, lyrical style as his early masterpieces, Wong bends the conventions of the martial-arts genre to create an unusual sort of historical epic — one in which a country's long-standing social and cultural divisions become physicalized using depictions of hand-to-hand combat. The film seems to have been chopped up in the editing room, but it still has grandeur. **ADAM NAYMAN**

Drama

The Spectacular Now

Director. James Ponsoldt

Stars. Miles Teller, Shailene Woodley

The Spectacular Now may be this generation's The Breakfast Club. Its by no means as funny (nor does it intend to be) but similar themes (and even the tidy use of personal essay as epilogue) are definitely present. In the film, a charming teen reluctantly falls for his rebound girlfriend even as he battles burgeoning alcoholism and a fuzzy future. Deftly directed by James Ponsoldt (Smashed), few films deal with teenage drama with such skilled tenderness.
STEVE GOW

Documentary

One Direction: This Is Us

Director. Morgan Spurlock

Stars. One Direction

One Direction fans will flock to this film no matter what, but for the dozen others considering watching it: don't! Yes, the cheeky Brits offer a few laughs backstage and the (very) brief interviews with their families are heartwarming, but the bulk of this doc is One Direction on stage and, frankly, they put on a boring show. The lads tell us they're not your typical boy band (they don't dance, you see), but without the choreographed routines you're left just listening to the music — and, if you're not already a fan, their concert won't persuade you.
REGAN REID

Movie embraces the moral greys

Ender's Game. Teen novel-turned-film bucks the trend of good and evil tales

Gavin Hood, director of Ender's Game. GETTY IMAGES

These days, movies for teens tend to revel in dichotomies — the black-and-white simplicity of good versus evil.

With Ender's Game, the hotly anticipated adaptation of the seminal sci-fi novel, director Gavin Hood is excited by the opportunity to explore the moral greys.

"Some films masquerade as dealing with moral complexity, but in fact, for me, cop out a little by never putting the protagonist in a truly morally complex situation," Hood said in a recent interview at the pop culture fest known as Fan Expo Canada.

"There are films we can think of where, yes, the protagonist kills people, but actually all the people they kill are bad or awful in some way, (without) that moment of really having to face up to the grey zone — that place where you ask, 'Am I capable of doing something morally repugnant because I believe it's for a greater good?'

"I think that young people are far smarter than we give them credit for. they're capable of really intense conversation. ... At the heart of it, (Ender's Game) is a powerful character-driven story about a complicated character who's not necessarily likable all the time, and that's a tricky thing for a mainstream movie."

Ender's Game tells the story of a boy named Ender Wiggin, who shows prodigious military gifts and is thrust into an intense training program to command fleets and combat a potential alien threat against a diminished, futuristic Earth. After years of scrapped screenplays, the film version finally got underway in 2009 but only landed a distribution deal in 2011.

"As much as people were drawn to the complex themes, they also feared them," Hood says. "It's an interesting challenge bringing the book to the screen."

The film is set to open in Canadian theatres Nov. 1.
THE CANADIAN PRESS

mongrel

★★★★ (Highest Rating)

"It's Better Than Anything You Can Imagine."
-Rex Reed, THE NEW YORK OBSERVER

"Grade A. Powerful and Enthralling."
(Highest Rating) -Owen Gleiberman, ENTERTAINMENT WEEKLY

"Startling and Brilliant
Cate Blanchett gives the most complicated and demanding performance of her career."
-David Denby, THE NEW YORKER

Alec Baldwin
Cate Blanchett
Louis C.K.
Bobby Cannavale
Andrew Dice Clay
Sally Hawkins
Peter Sarsgaard
Michael Stuhlbarg

Blue Jasmine

Written and Directed by Woody Allen

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PG MATURE THEME

SONY PICTURES CLASSICS mongrel

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THESE PAGES COVER MOVIE START TIMES FROM FRI., AUG. 30 TO THURS., SEPT. 5 TIMES ARE SUBJECT TO CHANGE.

Cinema City McGillivray 2190 McGillivray Blvd.

2 Guns (14A) Fri-Mon 12:05-5:15-8-10:35 Tue 2:10-7:25-10:05 Wed-Thu 7:25-10:05
Elysium (14A) Fri-Mon 12:10-2:45-5:20-7:55-10:45 Tue 2:05-4:45-7:35-10:15 Wed 4:45-7:35-10:15 Thu 4:10-6:55
Kick-Ass 2 (18A) Fri-Mon 9:30 Tue-Thu 9
Lee Daniels' The Butler (14A) Fri-Mon 1-4-7-10 Tue 1-4-6:50-9:45 Wed-Thu 4-6:50-9:45 Fri-Tue 3:30-6:30-9:30 Wed-Thu 6:30-9:30
The Mortal Instruments: City of Bones (PG) Fri-Tue 1:15-4:15-7:10-10:10 Wed-Thu 4:15-7:10-10:10
One Direction: This Is Us 3D (G) No Passes Fri-Mon 12:30-2:55-5:25-7:50-10:10 No Passes Tue 1:50-4:30-7-9:20 No Passes Wed-Thu 4:30-7-9:20
Percy Jackson: Sea of Monsters (PG) Fri-Mon 2:40 Tue-Thu 4:50
Planes (G) Fri-Mon 12 Tue 1:45
Planes 3D (G) Fri-Mon 2:20-4:35-6:55 Tue-Thu 4:05-6:45
Riddick (18A) No Passes Thu 9:30
We're the Millers (14A) Fri-Tue 2-4:40-7:40-10:20 Wed-Thu 4:40-7:40-10:20 Fri-Tue 4:30-7:45-10:30 Wed-Thu 7:45-10:30
The World's End (14A) Fri-Mon 12:15-2:50-5:30-8:05-10:40 Tue 1:55-4:35-7:20-10 Wed-Thu 4:35-7:20-10 Fri-Tue 4-7:10-10 Wed-Thu 7:10-10

Cinema City Northgate 1399 McPhillips Street

Bakit Hindi Ka Crush Ng Crush Mo? (PG) Fri-Tue 1:40-4:30-7:30-10:10 Wed-Thu 5:40-8:20
Grown Ups 2 (PG) Fri-Tue 1:30-4:10-7-9:30 Wed-Thu 5:50-8:10
The Heat (14A) Fri-Tue 1:10-4-7:05-9:45 Wed-Thu 5:55-8:35
Iron Man 3 3D (PG) Fri-Tue 12:50-6:50 Wed-Thu 5:40
Jatt Airways (STC) Fri-Tue 1:45-5-8:10 Wed-Thu 5:25-8:30
Jatt Boys Putt Jattan De (PG) Fri-Tue 1:20-4:15-7:10-10 Wed-Thu 5:35-8:25
Man of Steel 3D (PG) Fri-Tue 3:45-9:50 Wed-Thu 8:30
Pacific Rim (PG) Fri-Tue 1:15
Pacific Rim 3D (PG) Fri-Tue 4:20-7:20-10:15 Wed-Thu 5:20-8:15
Turbo (G) Fri-Tue 1-3:20 Wed-Thu 5:30
Turbo 3D (G) Fri-Tue 5:40-8-10:20 Wed-Thu 7:50

Cinematheque 304-100 Arthur

Blackfish (STC) Fri-Sat 9
Charles Bradley: Soul of America (STC) Fri-Sun 7 Wed-Thu 7
No Films Showing Today (STC) Mon-Tue
To the Wonder (PG) Thu 9

City Cinema - Northgate 1399 McPhillips

Bakit Hindi Ka Crush Ng Crush Mo? (PG) Fri-Tue 1:40-4:30-7:30-10:10 Wed-Thu 5:40-8:20
Grown Ups 2 (PG) Fri-Tue 1:30-4:10-7-9:30 Wed-Thu 5:50-8:10
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Turbo (G) Fri-Tue 1-3:20 Wed-Thu 5:30
Turbo 3D (G) Fri-Tue 5:40-8-10:20 Wed-Thu 7:50

Famous Players Kildonan Place 1555 Regent Ave W

The Mortal Instruments: City of Bones (PG) Fri-Tue 1:10-4-7-10 Wed-Thu 5:20-8:20
One Direction: This Is Us (G) No Passes Fri-Tue 1:50
One Direction: This Is Us 3D (G) No Passes Fri-Tue 4:30-7:20-9:45 No Passes Wed-Thu 5:40-8
Percy Jackson: Sea of Monsters (PG) Fri-Tue 1:20
Percy Jackson: Sea of Monsters 3D (PG) Fri-Tue 3:50-6:50-9:30 Wed-Thu 5:50-8:30
We're the Millers (14A) Fri-Tue 1:10-4-7:30-10:10 Wed-Thu 5:30-8:40
The World's End (14A) Fri-Tue 1:30-4:10-7:10-9:50 Wed-Thu 5:20-8:10
You're Next (18A) Fri-Tue 1:40-4:20-7:40-10 Wed-Thu 6-8:30

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The Attack (14A) Dolby Stereo Digital, Sub-Titled Fri 6:30 Dolby Stereo Digital, Sub-Titled Sat-Mon 12:45-6:30 Dolby Stereo Digital, Sub-Titled Tue-Wed 6:30 Dolby Stereo Digital, Sub-Titled Thu 3:30
Blue Jasmine (PG) Dolby Stereo Digital Fri 3:35-6:40-9:25 Dolby Stereo Digital Sat-Mon 12:25-3:35-6:40-9:25 Dolby Stereo Digital Tue-Thu 3:35-6:40-9:25
Elysium (14A) Dolby Stereo Digital Fri 4:05-7:10-10 Dolby Stereo Digital Sat-Mon 12:35-4:05-7:10-10 Dolby Stereo Digital Tue-Wed 4:05-7:10-10 Dolby Stereo Digital Thu 4:05-10
Fruitvale Station (14A) Dolby Stereo Digital Fri-Wed 3:30-9:15
Getaway (PG) Dolby Stereo Digital Fri 4-7-9:30 Dolby Stereo Digital Sat-Mon 1-4-7-9:30 Dolby Stereo Digital Tue-Thu 4-7-9:30
The Grandmaster (PG) Dolby Stereo Digital, Sub-Titled Fri 3:40-6:45-9:50 Dolby Stereo Digital, Sub-Titled Sat-Mon 12:30-3:40-6:45-9:50 Dolby Stereo Digital, Sub-Titled Tue-Thu 3:40-6:45-9:50
Lee Daniels' The Butler (14A) Dolby Stereo Digital Fri 3:25-6:50-9:55 Dolby Stereo Digital Sat-Mon 12:20-3:25-6:50-9:55 Dolby Stereo Digital Tue-Thu 3:25-6:50-9:55
One Direction: This Is Us (G) Dolby Stereo Digital Fri-Thu 3:45-9:40
One Direction: This Is Us 3D (G) Dolby Stereo Digital Fri 6:55 Dolby Stereo Digital Sat-Mon 12:55-6:55 Dolby Stereo Digital Tue-Thu 6:55
Riddick (18A) Dolby Stereo Digital Thu 8
We're the Millers (14A) Dolby Stereo Digital Fri 3:55-7:05-9:45 Dolby Stereo Digital Sat-Mon 12:50-3:55-7:05-9:45 Dolby Stereo Digital Tue-Thu 3:55-7:05-9:45

You're Next. CONTRIBUTED

Landmark Globe Cinema 393 Portage Ave

Blue Jasmine (PG) Fri 7:15-9:40 Sat-Mon 1:15-3:40-7:15-9:40 Tue-Thu 7:15-9:40
I'm So Excited! (14A) Fri-Thu 9:45
Lee Daniels' The Butler (14A) Fri 7-10 Sat-Mon 1-4-7-10 Tue-Thu 7-10
Lovelace (18A) Fri 7:30 Sat-Mon 1:30-3:50-7:30 Tue-Thu 7:30

Landmark Towne Cinema 8 301 Notre Dame Avenue

Elysium (14A) Fri 3:45-7:15-9:45 Sat-Mon 12:45-3:45-7:15-9:45 Tue-Thu 7:15-9:45
Kick-Ass 2 (18A) Fri-Thu 7:15-9:45
Monsters University (G) Fri 3:45 Sat-Mon 1:15-3:45
The Mortal Instruments: City of Bones (PG) Fri 3:45-6:45-9:30 Sat-Mon 1-3:45-6:45-9:30 Tue-Thu 6:45-9:30
One Direction: This Is Us (G) Sat-Mon 3:30
One Direction: This Is Us 3D (G) Fri 3:30-7-9:20 Sat-Mon 1:15-7-9:20 Tue-Thu 7-9:20
Riddick (18A) Thu 9:30
The Smurfs 2 (G) Fri 3:30-7 Sat-Mon 12:45-3:30-7 Tue-Thu 7
Star Trek Into Darkness 3D (PG) Fri 6:45 Sat-Mon 12:45-6:45 Tue-Thu 6:45
We're the Millers (14A) Fri 3:30-7-9:30 Sat-Mon 1-3:30-7-9:30 Tue-Wed 7-9:30 Thu 7
World War Z 3D (14A) Fri-Mon 3:45-9:45 Tue-Thu 9:45
The World's End (14A) Fri 3:30-6:45-9:20 Sat-Mon 12:45-3:30-6:45-9:20 Tue-Thu 6:45-9:20
You're Next (18A) Fri-Thu 9:30

SilverCity Polo Park 815 St. James Street

2 Guns (14A) Fri-Mon 10:10 Tue-Wed 9:20
Closed Circuit (PG) Fri-Mon 12:45-3:10-5:35-8-10:25 Tue-Thu 3:10-5:35-8-10:25
Despicable Me 2 (G) Fri-Mon 12:05-2:40-5:10 Tue-Thu 1:35-4:10
Despicable Me 2 3D (G) Fri-Mon 7:40 Tue-Thu 6:40
Elysium (14A) Fri-Mon 11:55-2:40-5:20-8:05-10:45 Tue-Thu 2-4:40-7:15-10
Getaway (PG) Fri-Sun 1:20-3:35-5:55-8:15-10:35 Mon 1:15-3:35-5:55-8:15-10:35 Tue 1:20-3:35-5:50-8:10-10:30 Wed 3:35-5:50-8:10-10:30 Thu 1:20-3:35-5:50-8:10-10:30 Star & Strollers Screening Wed 1
Jobs (PG) Fri-Thu 9:50
Kick-Ass 2 (18A) Fri-Sat 12:15-2:45-5:20-7:55-10:35 Sun 1:15-5:20-7:55-10:35 Mon 12:15-2:45-5:20-7:55-10:35 Tue-Thu 2:45-5:15-7:45-10:20
Lee Daniels' The Butler (14A) Fri-Tue 1:15-4:15-7:15-10:15 Wed 4:15-7:15-10:15 Thu 1:15-4:15-7:15-10:15 Star & Strollers Screening Wed 1
The Mortal Instruments: City of Bones (PG) Thu 9:20
The Mortal Instruments: City of Bones — The IMAX Experience (PG) Fri 1:45-4:45-7:45-10:45 Sat 10:50-1:45-4:45-7:45-10:45 Sun-Mon 1:45-4:45-7:45-10:45 Tue 1:45-4:45-7:30-10:20 Wed 1:45-4:45-7:30-10:25 Thu 1:25-4:25-7:25
National Theatre Live: The Audience Encore (STC) Sun 12:30
One Direction: This Is Us (G) No Passes Fri 12:40 No Passes Sat 11-12:40 No Passes Sun-Mon 12:40 No Passes Tue-Thu 3:05
One Direction: This Is Us 3D (G) No Passes Fri-Mon 3:05-5:25-7:45-10:05 No Passes Tue-Thu 5:25-7:45-10:05
Percy Jackson: Sea of Monsters (PG) Fri-Mon 11:55 Tue-Thu 2:30
Percy Jackson: Sea of Monsters 3D (PG) Fri-Mon 2:30-5:05-7:35-10 Tue-Thu 5:05-7:35-10:10
Planes (G) Fri-Mon 12:10 Tue-Thu 2:15
Planes 3D (G) Fri-Mon 2:40-5:05-7:30 Tue-Thu 5-7:25
Riddick: The IMAX Experience (18A) No Passes Thu 10:25
Rudy (STC) Sat 11
The Smurfs 2 (G) Fri-Mon 12:45 Tue-Thu 3:20
We're the Millers (14A) Fri-Thu 1:40-4:20-7:05-9:45
The Wolverine (14A) Fri-Sat 12:55-3:55-6:50-9:55 Sun 3:55-6:50-9:55 Mon 12:55-3:55-6:50-9:55 Tue-Thu 1:15-4:05-7-9:55
The World's End (14A) Fri-Mon 12-2:35-5:10-7:50-10:25 Tue-Thu 1:45-4:25-7:10-9:55
You're Next (18A) Fri-Mon 3:20-5:45-8:10-10:40 Tue-Thu 5:45-8:05-10:30

SilverCity St. Vital 110-1225 St Mary's Rd

Despicable Me 2 (G) Fri-Mon 11:50 Tue-Thu 2
Despicable Me 2 3D (G) Fri-Mon 2:10-4:35-7 Tue-Thu 4:25-7
Elysium (14A) Fri-Sat 11:55-2:25-4:55-7:30-10:10 Sun 2:25-4:55-7:30-10:10 Mon 11:55-2:25-4:55-7:30-10:10 Tue-Thu 2:10-4:50-7:25-10
Getaway (PG) Fri-Sat 1:15-3:35-5:55-8:15-10:35 Sun 3:35-5:55-8:15-10:30 Mon 1:15-3:35-5:55-8:15-10:30 Tue-Thu 2:55-5:35-7:55-10:25
Kick-Ass 2 (18A) Fri-Thu 9:30
The Mortal Instruments: City of Bones (PG) Fri-Mon 1:20-4:20-7:15-10:25 Tue-Thu 1:45-4:40-7:35-10:30
One Direction: This Is Us (G) No Passes Fri-Mon 12:40 No Passes Tue-Thu 3:05
One Direction: This Is Us 3D (G) No Passes Fri-Mon 3:05-5:25-7:45-10:05 No Passes Tue-Thu 5:25-7:45-10:05
Percy Jackson: Sea of Monsters (PG) Fri-Mon 12:10 Tue-Wed 2:40 Thu 1:15
Percy Jackson: Sea of Monsters 3D (PG) Fri-Mon 2:40-5:10-7:40-10:20 Tue-Wed 5:10-7:40-10:20 Thu 3:45-6:30
Planes (G) Fri-Sat 12:15 Sun 12:30 Mon 12:15 Tue-Wed 2:05 Star & Strollers Screening Thu 1 Sat 11:05
Planes 3D (G) Fri-Mon 2:30-4:50-7:10-9:40 Tue-Thu 4:20-6:50-9:20
Riddick (18A) No Passes Thu 9:30
Rudy (STC) Sat 11
The Smurfs 2 (G) Fri 12:05-2:35 Sat 11:15 Sun 1-2:35 Mon 12:05-2:35 Tue-Thu 2:15 Sat 2:35
We're the Millers (14A) Fri-Thu 1:55-4:30-7:20-10:15
The World's End (14A) Fri-Sat 12-2:45-5:20-7:55-10:30 Sun 2:45-5:20-7:55-10:30 Mon 12-2:45-5:20-7:55-10:30 Tue-Wed 1:50-4:35-7:15-9:50 Thu 4:35-7:15-9:50 Star & Strollers Screening Thu 1
You're Next (18A) Fri-Mon 5:05-7:25-9:45 Tue-Thu 4:45-7:05-9:25

Long weekend tunes

SOUND CHECK
Alan Cross
scene@metronews.ca

Labour Day. The saddest long weekend of the year. Maybe there's something here that will cheer you up.

Skyfall/ Russian Army Choir

Six members of the army covering Adele for a Moscow morning show? James Bond gets respect, even in Russia.

One/ Yamantaka // Sonic Titan

These "Noh-wave" experimentalists (and former Polaris Music Prize Short Listers) from Montreal have a new album entitled UZU coming Oct. 29. I, for one, can't wait.

No Rain/Blind Melon

Isolated vocals — just the recording of the singing of well-known songs — are appearing online in increasing numbers. Here's what Shannon Hoon sounded like with all the music stripped away. No Auto-Tune here, kids.

Mind the App

iTunes Festival London 2013

MIND THE APP
Kris Abel
@RealKrisAbel
scene@metronews.ca

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Katy Perry, Elton John, and Justin Timberlake will be among 30 nights of free concerts worth watching streamed live and on demand from the iTunes Festival in London this September.

Timberlake. Drop what you're doing, Justin needs you!

Justin Timberlake had people taking back the streets. GETTY IMAGES

Hundreds of people flooded the streets outside a New Jersey nightclub after Justin Timberlake took to social media about filming a commercial.

The singer tweeted on Wednesday: "Join me & @ Target tonight for just one song. Let's 'Take Back the Night.' First 150 get in. See you there!"

Fans jammed the street outside Maxwell's in Hoboken, and police used loudspeakers to control the crowd.

The Jersey Journal reports that Timberlake's wife, Jessica Biel, was spotted near his trailer.

The indie-rock club closed its doors after a 35-year run in July. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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Thirty Seconds to Mars
September 18

Robin Thicke
September 24

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Is Alan Thicke similar to his TV dad personality? He and wife Tanya are the newest celebrity couple on reality TV. CONTRIBUTED

Show keeps viewers In the Thicke of It

It's a question that keeps Growing Pains fans awake at night to this day: is actor Alan Thicke really as understanding and great a dad as his onscreen persona, Jason Seaver?

"I don't think there will be any great surprises in my character," says the Kirkland Lake, Ont., actor.

He and his wife of eight years (together for 14), Tanya Thicke Callau, are the newest celebrity couple to open their home to reality television cameras for In the Thicke of It, airing this winter on Slice.

"I think we all had qualms about it to some degree," said Thicke. "Not as bad as when I was offered a commercial for an erectile dysfunction tablet ExtenZe a couple of years ago. That was a big family conversation. Whether you really want to be the face of erectile dysfunction and whether that was flattery or not."

After that conversation, deciding to do reality television show was relatively easy for the family.

"It seemed a good opportunity to maybe create a hybrid of the genre," said Thicke. "A reality-comedy. we see this falling somewhere between Larry David and the Kardashians. That is our hope, to have fun with real life."

And, yes, that look inside the Thicke family dynamics will include some backstage appearances with Blurred Line's singer Robin, along with medical marijuana advocate Brennan and high schooler Carter.

"The three children, we expect to deal with them in their venue, in their genre," said Thicke. As for revealing details of his life with wife Tanya, Thicke said, "We've paid our dues with each other and we are not afraid."

"We are also the Ricky and Lucy I think," adds Tanya, who is Latina and met her husband in Miami when he was hosting an event.

"Culturally we are miles apart, but somehow we have managed to meet in the middle," added Thicke.

In the Thicke of It premieres in winter 2014.

METRO

Give us some gossip!

So what is it like to be at a Jenner-Kardashian Christmas party?

- "If anyone knows how to spend money it is Kris Jenner, and she just throws a very lavish, exciting, fun party," says Tanya Thicke Callau, who was one of Kris' bridesmaids. "They are all dressed in black and white — go figure — and I believe a couple years ago Bruce Jenner got into an incident with the neighbour."
- "There was an incident last year, and the cameras weren't around to cover it," added Alan Thicke. "The neighbours were complaining about parking or whatever was going on, and Bruce literally duked it out with this guy in the driveway. No cameras in sight."

Old-school comedy goes quicker, faster and funnier

Package Deal. Executive producer says character development takes a backseat to rapid-fire delivery these days

Package Deal airs Mondays on City starting Sept. 30. CONTRIBUTED

There was a time when an audience would hear how a show was "filmed in front of a live studio audience" rather than the rumbling ha-ha-has of a laugh track. City's new show Package Deal is a return to the old-school ways of comedy.

"It was my first time doing anything live," admitted Julia Votch, who plays the woman who comes between three close brothers in this original series.

"I haven't done theatre … so I was a bit nervous, but the first time hearing them laugh at you and what you are doing, it felt so great and it heightened everyone's performance."

Executive produced by Andrew Orenstein, and also staring Randal Edwards, Jay Malone and Harland Williams, the series was to premiere in the spring, and then summer, before being pushed into the fall by City.

It will now air Mondays starting Sept. 30, edged between How I Met Your Mother and 2 Broke Girls.

"For the first time in my career we were actually bumped for hockey," joked Orenstein, who worked on Malcolm in the Middle and 3rd Rock from the Sun. "I think it is a nice vote of confidence for the show that, you know, they looked at our show, and they went and looked at the other shows that they are buying, and thought, 'Well, heck, it would fit in nicely.'"

Orenstein says that in the last 10 or 15 years, the reality of situational comedy shows has changed. There used to be time to develop characters at the expense of rapid-fire jokes, but the reverse is now true.

"The world is quicker," he said. "You have to be quicker and faster and funnier." METRO

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Michael's jailbird son Cameron thought to be reason behind Douglas — Zeta Jones split

The recent split between Michael Douglas and Catherine Zeta-Jones was reportedly spurred along by tension caused by his incarcerated son, Cameron Douglas, according to Radar Online.

"Cameron is in solitary confinement and hasn't seen his father in an eternity, as he can't have visitors. Michael is beside himself. It consumes him," a source says. "Cameron and Catherine never seemed to have a close relationship, and I think Michael always felt she just didn't care for the situation. He probably felt there was little sympathy from her toward him and Cameron."

Cameron is expected to remain in prison on drug charges until 2018.

Michael Douglas and Catherine Zeta Jones

Busy Braff keen to please all 46,000 investors of his imminent Kickstarter flick

After his hugely successful Kickstarter campaign to fund his next movie drew just as much criticism as support, Zach Braff knows he has something to prove as Wish I Was Here goes into production. "If this is the test case for this way of financing a movie, I want to set the bar really, really high," Braff tells E! News. Of course, having 46,000 investors for your film can be a bit daunting, but Braff says no one is getting short shrift. "If any of these 46,000 people email us or contact us, they get a response that day, hopefully within a couple of hours," he says. "We treat them like they're guests at the fanciest hotel and we're the concierge."

Zach Braff ALL IMAGES GETTY

METRO DISH

OUR TAKE ON THE WORLD OF CELEBRITIES

The Word

Let's cut Cyrus some slack and remember what we did in our crazy 20s

PAT HEALY
Metro World News in Boston

I'm just going to go ahead and say it: Miley Cyrus really doesn't care and I sort of love her for it. What? Don't look at me like that. The hipster dream sequence/American Apparel-ad on-acid spectacle that was the video for We Can't Stop was weird as hell, but it was also sort of amazing. And you all know it.

And here's the thing, people. Do you know how old Miley Cyrus is? She is 20 years old. Do you remember what you were doing at 20? Not caring about anything pretty much. Getting all kinds of messed up on all kinds of substances and making all kinds of mistakes. (Ahem, at least that's what I imagine YOU all were doing. I was studying for finals, in my pajamas, at all times.)

The difference between 20-year-old Miley Cyrus and 20-year-old you and me, however, is that we didn't have cameras documenting our every move. (Unless you did, in which case — hey, cool, thanks for taking time out of your fancy celebrity life and reading this column!)

So, in my estimation, Miley Cyrus is pretty much hitting all the normal, 20-year-old idiot signposts — and awesomely so.

Case and point: in response to the hysterics since her VMA performance (I'm having a little chuckle at my desk right now imagining middle-aged women furiously googling the word "twerk" and getting really, really confused) Miley did not issue some half-assed apology for slutting it up and having a good time via Twitter.

No, Miley instead began tweeting a bunch of slutty pics of herself — all of them featuring her bony butt from its least bony angle — by way of issuing the world a big middle finger. Get on with your bad self, Miley.

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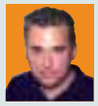

LIQUID ASSETS
Peter Rockwell
@therealwineguy
liquidassets@eastlink.ca

Coming from the Maritimes, I know that September can offer the best beach weather of the year. Even so, for the vast majority of Canadians the Labour Day is summer's last call.

Since the acknowledgment of hard work is the reason why we have this Monday off, I can't think of a better way to say a premature adios to summer than with a toast using something that took a little effort to create.

European bartenders have been mixing and matching their local liquids for decades, creating easy-to-make cocktails that more often than not have a wine base. All you need to get started is a bottle of white or sparkling.

In France's Burgundy region, Kir (using white) and Kir Royale (using sparkling) is made by adding a teaspoon of Crème de Cassis ($20.79 to $22.20) – a thick fruited blackberry liqueur — to the wine.

My favourite vino cocktail is The Spritz, invented in Northern Italy. Made with bubbly Prosecco, a dash of bitter Aperol ($21.99 to $26.98) aperitif and topped off with fizzy water, it's refreshing, no matter the season. **PRICES REFLECT RANGE ACROSS COUNTRY. SOME PRODUCTS MAY NOT BE AVAILABLE IN ALL PROVINCES.**

Marinades are the easiest way to add flavours to your meals. MATTHEW MEAD/ THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

One final summer long weekend hurrah

Marinades. Surprise your backyard get-together guests with some new flavours

Citrus marinades

Citrus juices are fairly acidic, which means they permeate and tenderize food quickly.

They work great as a base for marinades that you want to throw together just before dinner. For seafood, marinate for up to 30 minutes; chicken and steak can handle up to 2 hours.

Chipotle-Lime: Juice and zest of 2 limes, 2 tablespoons adobo sauce and 1 minced chipotle chili from a can of chipotles in adobo sauce, 2 cloves minced garlic, a hefty pinch of salt.

Orange-Cumin: Juice and zest of 1 orange, 1 tablespoon ground cumin, 1 teaspoon chili powder, 1 teaspoon garlic powder, a hefty pinch of salt. Try with haddock or chicken breasts.

Lemon-Herb: Juice and zest of 1 lemon, 1 tablespoon Italian herb blend, 1 teaspoon ground black pepper, hefty pinch of salt. Good on salmon or chicken thighs.

Vinaigrette marinades

Because vinegar is so aggressive, you'll want to temper it with oil. This helps carry the flavour into the food, as well as prevent the flavours from becoming too jarring. For fish, seafood and vegetables, marinate for 30 minutes and to up to 2 hours. For chicken, steak and pork, you can go for up to 8 hours.

Garlic-Balsamic: 2 tablespoons olive oil, 2 tablespoons balsamic vinegar, 4 cloves minced garlic, hefty pinch salt. Try with pork loin or steak tips.

Spicy Hoison: 2 tablespoons rice vinegar, 2 tablespoons hoisin sauce, 1 tablespoon vegetable oil, 1 teaspoon red pepper flakes, 1 teaspoon five-spice powder. Try on chicken tenders or scallops.

Maple-Soy: 2 tablespoons soy sauce, 3 tablespoons apple cider vinegar, 2 tablespoons maple syrup. Try with pork tenderloin medallions or cod.

Wine marinades

Wine is a great base for subtle marinades. Because they have a softer flavour than citrus or vinegar, you can use them to highlight other flavours. These marinades work especially well for hearty vegetables and meats. Marinate from 30 minutes to overnight.

Red Wine-Rosemary: 1/4 cup red wine, 1 tablespoon olive oil, hefty pinch each of salt and black pepper, 1 large stem rosemary, chopped. Try with portobello mushrooms.

White Wine-Mustard: 1/4 cup dry white wine, 3 tablespoons Dijon mustard, 1 tablespoon vegetable oil, hefty pinch each salt and black pepper. Great with chicken or eggplant.

Raspberry-Ginger: 1/4 cup sweet red wine, 1/4 cup seedless raspberry jam, 1 tablespoon vegetable oil, 2 tablespoons grated ginger, hefty pinch each salt and black pepper. Try on pork chops. THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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Bombers QB Justin Goltz could get the start Sunday in a tough matchup versus the Roughriders. DARRYL DYCK/THE CANADIAN PRESS FILE

Bombers shore up D for battle vs. Riders

CFL. Winnipeg enlists DE in hope of avoiding another Labour Day massacre against scorching Saskatchewan

Another day, another new player for the Winnipeg Blue Bombers as they prepare to face the Saskatchewan Roughriders Sunday in Regina.

The Bombers (1-7) announced they had signed import defensive end Greg Peach Thursday and then confirmed he will play in Sunday's game against Saskatchewan (7-1).

Defensive co-ordinator Casey Creehan says he likes the way Peach goes all out in a game.

"After the performance we put out there in the first quarter of last week — we had guys turning down hits, we had guys not running to the ball — we played uninspired football and we aren't going to tolerate it," he said.

"Bringing a guy like Greg Peach in, I know that he will play balls to the wall, 100 miles an hour every snap."

Peach agrees with Creehan's assessment that the effort he puts in is one of his biggest strengths.

"I might not be the most freakish athlete, I just give everything I've got, every play, and I work my pass rush," he said.

He was released by the Hamilton Tiger-Cats, where he appeared in 15 games last season, registering 36 tackles and six sacks.

Meanwhile, head coach Tim Burke says the Bombers won't announce who their starting quarterback will be until Friday morning.

Max Hall has been nursing an injured hand but it didn't seem to hamper his throwing much in practice Thursday. Buck Pierce is also out with an unspecified injury.

Justin Goltz is healthy and was also taking lots of snaps Thursday. He says he feels comfortable with the new offence Marcel Bellefeuille has brought to the team since replacing Gary Crowton this month at offensive co-ordinator.

It's just one of the many changes the Bombers have implemented to turn around a dismal season that led to the firing of general manager Joe Mack and team president Garth Buchko.

This week alone the Bombers cut place-kicker Justin Palardy and receiver Isaac Anderson. They also signed new receivers Mike Sims-Walker, a five-season NFL veteran, and Aaron Kelly, who spent two years with the Hamilton Tiger-Cats before being released this spring.

On paper it doesn't look like the Bombers have a chance against the Roughriders.

Saskatchewan has scored a league high 264 points so far this season and allowed just 177, while Winnipeg has allowed a league-high 247 and scored just 167.

The Bombers haven't managed to beat Saskatchewan in their annual Labour Day weekend game since 2004 and last year were humiliated 52-0.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Labour Day Classic pick

Blue Bombers at Roughrider, Sunday, 3 p.m. (TSN)

Saskatchewan (7-1) has the league's best record while Winnipeg (1-7) is tied with Edmonton for the worst. And while the Riders have won two games since suffering their first loss of the season, both have been by just three points.

A constant this season has been Kory Sheets, the CFL rushing leader with 1,058 yards already. Quarterback Darian Durant has a league-high 17 TD passes with no interceptions.

The Bombers' biggest issues continue to be on offence. They managed just 11 first downs and 235 net yards against Hamilton and had just five plays for no first downs in the opening quarter.

Pick: Riders

CFL

Williams ruled a free agent by Ontario court

The CFL Players' Association says disgruntled receiver Chris Williams is now a free agent following an Ontario Superior Court of Justice ruling.

On Thursday, the court issued a ruling that quashed an arbitrator's decision in June that Williams' contract with the Hamilton Tiger-Cats was binding even though the club violated the CFL's collective bargaining agreement with the CFLPA.

Williams went to arbitration asking to be released from the final year of his contract with Hamilton to reportedly pursue NFL offers. THE CANADIAN PRESS

CFL

Argos lose their Ray of sunshine

The Toronto Argonauts are Zach Collaros's team for the foreseeable future.

Collaros takes over as the starting quarterback after Argos coach Scott Milanovich dropped a bombshell Thursday, announcing incumbent Ricky Ray is out approximately six weeks with a shoulder injury.

Ray, 33, was injured in the first quarter of Toronto's 35-14 home loss to Calgary on Friday. After throwing the ball away, a scrambling Ray extended his right arm to brace his fall upon being hit by Stampeders defensive lineman Charleston Hughes.

"Ricky has a partial tear (in) a muscle in his shoulder that's called the teres major, Milanovich said. "I've been informed that's not part of the rotator cuff.

"He's going to be out approximately six weeks. It could be a couple of weeks less or a couple of weeks more depending on he responds to his rehab." THE CANADIAN PRESS

Taking it too far

"I think it's ridiculous. It was a clean hit."

Argos head coach Scott Milanovich on Charleston Hughes' hit on Ricky Ray last week. Hughes said he received multiple threatening e-mails through his personal website for the hit.

Football

NFL agrees to pay $765M to settle concussion cases

The NFL agreed to pay more than three-quarters of a billion dollars to settle lawsuits from thousands of former players who developed dementia or other concussion-related health problems they say were caused by the very on-field violence that fuelled the game's rise to popularity and profit.

The settlement, unprecedented in sports, was announced Thursday after two months of court-ordered mediation and is subject to approval by a federal judge. It came exactly a week before the first game of the 2013 season, removing a major legal and financial threat hanging over the sport for two years.

U.S. District Judge Anita B. Brody in Philadelphia is expected to rule on the settlement in two to three months.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

NHL

Chiarelli signs on to stay in Boston

The Bruins have signed general manager Peter Chiarelli, who built the team that reached the Stanley Cup final twice in three years, to a four-year contract extension that would keep him in Boston through the 2017-18 season.

Chiarelli, 49, will enter his eighth season with Boston when training camp opens next month. The Bruins have qualified for the playoffs in six of his first seven years, compiling a 50-35 post-season record and winning the Stanley Cup in 2011.

The Bruins will hold a press conference with Chiarelli on Friday.

Boston has compiled a 291-187-62 record with Chiarelli in the front office, and has had five seasons of 90 points or more.

Chiarelli will also continue on as alternate governor on the NHL's Board of Governors, the team said Thursday.

THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Bouchard bounced out in second round

U.S. Open. Montrealer has her serve broken seven times in loss to women's eighth seed

Montreal's Eugenie Bouchard fought off four match points before losing 6-4, 2-6, 6-3 to eighth-seeded Angelique Kerber on Thursday in the second round of the U.S. Open.

Bouchard was unable to match her third-round Wimbledon showing last month.

The teen, ranked 59th in the world, finished with 41 winners and 43 errors against Kerber.

Bouchard broke six times on 14 chances but lost her own serve on seven occasions and committed seven double-faults.

Bouchard saved four match points through winners as she served trailing a set and 3-5 in the third. But a serving error handed Kerber a fifth winning chance, with the German taking the victory on Bouchard's wide forehand.

"It's always disappointing to lose, I'm a bit down about that," Bouchard said. "I felt I played well, I tried to be aggressive. But she's a good counter-puncher, every time I came to the net she passed me.

"My first serve was nowhere as good as it can be, but I made up for some of it with my second serve. But I need to work on my fitness as well as my mental strength. This match showed that I'm close, I was dictating and competing. But I need to get a bit more consistent."

Aleksandra Wozniak of Blainville, Que., playing only her second match since March after last autumn's shoulder injury, faced a huge task against double Grand Slam champion Victoria Azarenka and lost 6-3, 6-1.

THE CANADIAN PRESS

Eugenie Bouchard returns a shot to Angelique Kerber at the U.S. Open in New York on Thursday. DAVID GOLDMAN/THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

Men's action

Milos Raonic of Thornhill, Ont., advanced to the third round at Flushing Meadows with a 6-1, 6-2, 6-4 victory over Spain's Pablo Andujar on Thursday.

MLB

AMERICAN LEAGUE

EAST DIVISION	W	L	Pct	GB
Boston	79	55	.590	—
Tampa Bay	75	57	.568	3
Baltimore	70	61	.534	7½
New York	70	63	.526	8½
Toronto	**60**	**74**	**.448**	**19**
CENTRAL DIVISION				
Detroit	78	56	.582	—
Cleveland	71	61	.538	6
Kansas City	69	64	.519	8½
Minnesota	57	75	.432	20
Chicago	56	76	.424	21
WEST DIVISION				
Texas	78	55	.586	—
Oakland	75	58	.564	3
Los Angeles	60	72	.455	17½
Seattle	59	73	.447	18½
Houston	44	88	.333	33½

Thursday's results
L.A. Angels 2 Tampa Bay 0
Kansas City 3 Minnesota 1
Detroit 7 Oakland 6
Baltimore at Boston
Seattle at Houston
Wednesday's results
Toronto 7 N.Y. Yankees 2
Oakland 14 Detroit 4
Texas 12 Seattle 4
Tampa Bay 4 L.A. Angels 1
Chicago White Sox 6 Houston 1
Kansas City 8 Minnesota 1
Boston 4 Baltimore 3
Friday's games
All times Eastern
Baltimore (Gonzalez 8-6) at N.Y. Yankees (Sabathia 11-11), 7:05 p.m.
Kansas City (Santana 8-7) at **Toronto (Buehrle 10-7)**, 7:07 p.m.
Cleveland (McAllister 7-7) at Detroit (Porcello 10-7), 7:08 p.m.
Chicago White Sox (Santiago 4-7) at Boston (Dempster 6-9), 7:10 p.m.
Minnesota (Hendriks 0-2) at Texas (Darvish 12-5), 8:05 p.m.
Seattle (Walker 0-0) at Houston (Peacock 3-4), 8:10 p.m.
Tampa Bay (Price 8-5) at Oakland (Parker 10-6), 10:05 p.m.

NATIONAL LEAGUE

EAST DIVISION	W	L	Pct	GB
Atlanta	81	52	.609	—
Washington	68	65	.511	13
Philadelphia	61	73	.455	20½
New York	60	72	.455	20½
Miami	49	83	.371	31½
CENTRAL DIVISION				
St. Louis	78	55	.586	—
Pittsburgh	77	56	.579	1
Cincinnati	75	59	.560	3½
Milwaukee	59	74	.444	19
Chicago	56	77	.421	22
WEST DIVISION				
Los Angeles	78	55	.586	—
Arizona	68	64	.515	9½
Colorado	63	72	.467	16
San Diego	60	73	.451	18
San Francisco	59	74	.444	19

Thursday's results
Atlanta 3 Cleveland 1
Milwaukee 4 Pittsburgh 0
N.Y. Mets 11 Philadelphia 3
Washington 9 Miami 0
Wednesday's results
Colorado 5 San Francisco 4
Atlanta 3 Cleveland 2
Philadelphia 6 N.Y. Mets 2
San Diego 5 Arizona 1
Cincinnati 10 St. Louis 0
Pittsburgh 7 Milwaukee 1
Washington 4 Miami 3
L.A. Dodgers 4 Chicago Cubs 0
Friday's games — All times Eastern
Philadelphia (Halladay 3-4) at Chicago Cubs (Samardzija 8-11), 2:20 p.m.
St. Louis (Miller 12-8) at Pittsburgh (Liriano 14-6), 7:05 p.m.
N.Y. Mets (Gee 9-9) at Washington (Zimmermann 15-7), 7:05 p.m.
Miami (Fernandez 10-5) at Atlanta (Teheran 10-7), 7:30 p.m.
L.A. Angels (Weaver 8-7) at Milwaukee (Peralta 8-13), 8:10 p.m.
Cincinnati (Arroyo 13-9) at Colorado (Manship 0-4), 8:40 p.m.
San Francisco (Lincecum 7-13) at Arizona (Delgado 4-4), 9:40 p.m.
San Diego (Stults 8-11) at L.A. Dodgers (Ryu 12-5), 10:10 p.m.

CFL

EAST DIVISION	GP	W	L	T	PF	PA	Pt
Toronto	8	5	3	0	244	209	10
Hamilton	8	4	4	0	203	219	8
Montreal	8	3	5	0	195	239	6
Winnipeg	8	1	7	0	167	247	2
WEST DIVISION							
Saskatchewan	8	7	1	0	264	177	14
Calgary	8	6	2	0	261	200	12
B.C.	8	5	3	0	207	203	10
Edmonton	8	1	7	0	188	235	2

WEEK 10
Friday's game — All times Eastern
Hamilton at B.C., 10 p.m.
Sunday's game
Winnipeg at Saskatchewan, 4 p.m.
Monday's game
Edmonton at Calgary, 5 p.m.
Tuesday's game
Montreal at Toronto, 7:30 p.m.

MLS

EASTERN CONFERENCE	W	L	T	GF	GA	Pts
Montreal	12	7	5	41	35	41
New York	11	9	6	38	34	39
Kansas City	11	9	6	36	26	39
Philadelphia	10	8	8	37	37	38
New England	10	9	6	34	24	36
Houston	10	8	6	29	28	36
Chicago	10	10	4	30	34	34
Columbus	8	12	5	29	34	29
Toronto	4	12	9	22	34	21
D.C.	3	17	5	15	41	14
WESTERN CONFERENCE						
Salt Lake	13	8	6	48	33	45
Los Angeles	12	9	4	40	32	40
Colorado	10	7	9	33	27	39
Portland	9	4	12	37	26	39
Seattle	11	8	4	31	26	37
Dallas	9	7	10	36	38	37
Vancouver	10	9	6	36	33	36
San Jose	9	10	7	28	37	34
Chivas	5	14	6	24	45	21

Friday's games — All times Eastern
New England at Toronto, 7 p.m.
Portland at Real Salt Lake, 10 p.m.
Saturday's games
Seattle at Columbus, 7:30 p.m.
Montreal at Philadelphia, 7:30 p.m.
D.C. at New York, 8 p.m.
Colorado at Kansas City, 8:30 p.m.
San Jose at Los Angeles, 10:30 p.m.

Horoscopes

♈ Aries
March 21 - April 20
You have met so many challenges lately that you are entitled to back off — but you won't. Mars, your ruler, is urging you to go on the attack. Keep the pressure on your rivals, and on yourself.

♉ Taurus
April 21 - May 21
There are a number of things you no longer need in your life and now is the time to get rid of them. You know what they are and how they are holding you back, so go on and purge.

♊ Gemini
May 22 - June 21
It will be easy to go over the top and say something you don't really mean — and the consequences could be costly. You don't need to be so forthright in your opinions.

♋ Cancer
June 22 - July 23
Your mind is moving super fast at the moment, thanks to the positive influence of Mercury. But others won't be so quick in the brain box department, so make allowances and spell out the answers for them.

♌ Leo
July 24 - Aug. 23
You must resolve to stay the course, whatever the temptation may be to cut your losses and get out. Your solar chart indicates that it will all work out right in the end.

♍ Virgo
Aug. 24 - Sept. 23
Even if the facts are on your side, you could be in a difficult position today because friends and colleagues have got it completely wrong and you don't want to embarrass them. Still, the truth is the truth.

♎ Libra
Sept. 24 - Oct. 23
Your popularity will soar over the next few days and people in positions of power will go out of their way to do you favours. Bear in mind though that they will expect those favours to be returned.

♏ Scorpio
Oct. 24 - Nov. 22
You are not the kind to let people dictate to you but cosmic activity in the career area of your chart suggests you may have to today. Try not to antagonize authority figures.

♐ Sagittarius
Nov. 23 - Dec. 21
A Sun-Saturn link will boost your self-discipline and make it easier for you to complete tasks that you might otherwise lose interest in. It's not true that Sags lack in staying power. Prove it.

♑ Capricorn
Dec. 22 - Jan. 20
There may be no logical reason why a certain person gets on your nerves but they do and there isn't much you can do about it. What you can do, of course, is stay out of their way for the next 24 hours.

♒ Aquarius
Jan. 21 - Feb. 19
Don't allow yourself to be talked into supporting a cause you don't believe in. Just because it is the fashionable thing does not make it right.

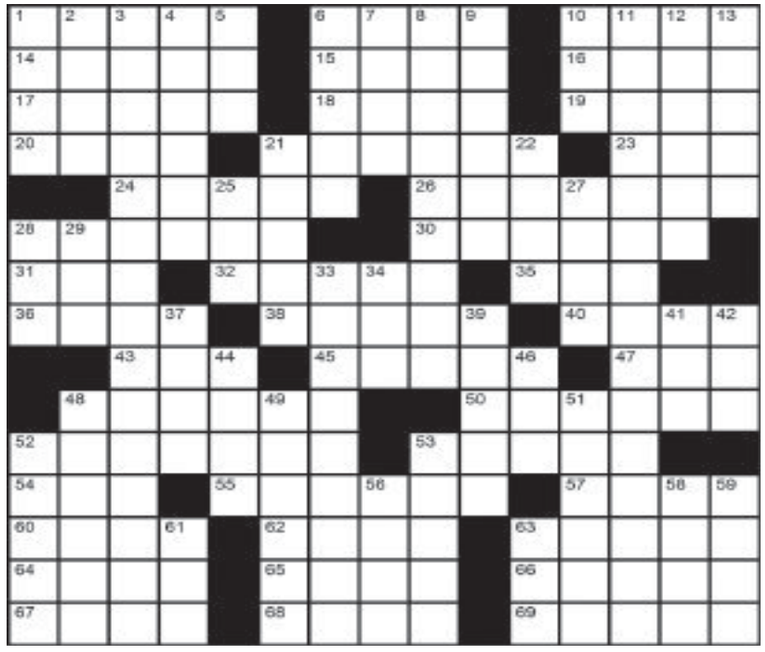
♓ Pisces
Feb. 20 - March 20
There is no point trying to explain why you have chosen to follow a certain course — few people are likely to understand. The only thing that matters is that you believe you are doing the right thing. Do you?

SALLY BROMPTON

Crossword: Canada Across and Down

See today's answers at metronews.ca/answers.

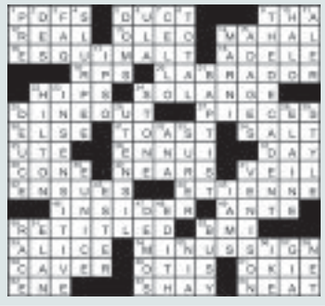
BY KELLY ANN BUCHANAN



Across
1. Apple, in Quebec City
6. Boxing blows
10. Cook's crackees
14. Vestibule
15. Fit
16. Ms. Loughlin of "Full House"
17. "Over There": Composed by George M. __
18. 'Proper' word?
19. String problem
20. Ladies
21. Swanky neighbourhood of Winnipeg
23. __ and flow
24. "__, __! I remember now!"
26. Escape; or, Selena Gomez's new movie
28. Fellini film, "La __" (1954)
30. Restrain: 2 wds.
31. Furry friend
32. "...upon so __ _ subject as myself." - Bit of Romeo and Juliet
35. Big hurricane, __. 5
36. Longbow woods
38. Hen's home
40. Crevice-filling wedge
43. Q. "What's the opposite of 'out'?" A. "'__', _ think."
45. Ms. O'Donnell
47. Numerical prefix
48. Mini burger
50. Vancouver-born actor James who played Scotty on "Star Trek"
52. Certain cracker
53. Category
54. "Babe: __ in the City" (1998)
55. Mary-Kate and Ashley
57. Venerations
60. Moisturizer ingredient
62. "Make __ __." ("Star Trek: The Next Generation" catchphrase)
63. Sharpshoot
64. Not ruffled
65. Crease
66. President Nixon's first VP, Spiro __
67. Rubik's Cube inventor, __ Rubik
68. Genuine
69. Gives up control

Down
1. Mil. ranks
2. "Wooow!"
3. Celine Dion hit: 5 wds.
4. Fredericton-born soprano Ms. Brueggergosman
5. Sea eagle, variantly
6. Roman Myth: God of beginnings
7. "...like _ __ of chocolates..." - Forrest Gump
8. Country sound
9. E-Mail getter, say
10. Antlered animal
11. Film classic on Vancouver-born actress Ann Rutherford's resume: 4 wds.
12. Josh of song
13. Be indifferent: 2 wds.
21. "Coffee, __ __ milk?"
22. Ear-related
25. NFL measurements
27. Collections of anecdotes
28. Mata Hari, for one
29. Little laugh, __-hee
33. Montreal-born opera great, Maureen __
34. Also
37. Miffed state
39. Rolling-to-shore waters
41. Mr. Gershwin
42. Maximum opp.
44. Prefix to 'syncrasy' (Mannerism)
46. Time type
48. Popeye's profession
49. Join the army
51. Netflix prison-set series, "__ Is the New Black"
52. Astronomer's interest
53. Pointed-hat garden ornament
56. Classic tongue-twister bit, "__ Wood sawed wood."
58. Blade in sports
59. Uses needle-and-thread
61. Jeff Lynne's gr.
63. Pouch

Yesterday's Crossword



Sudoku

How to play
Fill in the grid, so that every row, every column and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1-9. There is no math involved.

2		4	1		6	3		7
		5	8		4	9		
	7						8	
			3		7			
1								2
			9		2			
	4						3	
		2	7		5	1		
5		8	4		1	7		9

Yesterday's Sudoku

2	1	6	4	9	8	6	3	7
4	6	9	7	5	3	1	2	8
3	8	7	2	1	6	4	9	5
6	3	1	9	2	7	8	5	4
7	9	4	3	8	5	2	1	6
5	2	8	6	4	1	3	7	9
1	7	3	5	6	4	9	8	2
8	4	2	1	7	9	5	6	3
9	5	6	8	3	2	7	4	1

Weather

TODAY	SATURDAY	SUNDAY
MAX: 28° MIN: 19°	MAX: 33° MIN: 17°	MAX: 27° MIN: 15°

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